

ATLANTIC HIGH *FIRST TIME ACROSS*

CRUISING WORLD

MARCH 2015

CREWED BLISS

KICK BACK
AND ENJOY
A CHARTER

PAGE 46

DRAMA DOWN
UNDER: A LONG
BASH TO HOBART

PAGES 12 & 98

SURPRISE AND
DELIGHT IN
THE "MEXICAN
GALAPAGOS"

PAGE 33

LITHIUM-ION
BATTERIES
DONE RIGHT

PAGE 60

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ALL IMAGES BY BILLY BLACK

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Columns

- 8 Editor's Log
- 12 Underway
- 22 On Watch
- 27 Waypoints
- 30 Letter from *Aventura*
- 33 Destinations
- 69 Chartering News
- 98 Off Watch

Hands-On Sailor

- 54 **Spot the Pox**
Watch for corrosion where metals meet.
By Tom Zydler
- 56 **Transferring Fuel? Try This!**
A modified gas hose keeps diesel off the deck.
By Rick Martell
- 58 **Exhausting the Possibilities**
Be sure your exhaust system goes by the book.
By Steve D'Antonio

Boats & Gear

- 60 **Power Plays**
A look at three top-notch lithium-ion battery installations.
By Ed Sherman
- 64 **New and Improved**
Marlow Hunter debuts a sweet 37-footer.
By Mark Pillsbury
- 66 **Long Tall Sally**
The Hanse 575 is big and powerful for its size.
By Herb McCormick
- 68 **Night Moves**
New products to consider for when things go bump in the dark.
By Jen Brett

36

The crew has the Swan 57 Flyer powered up on a Narragansett Bay shakedown sail before her trans-Atlantic crossing.



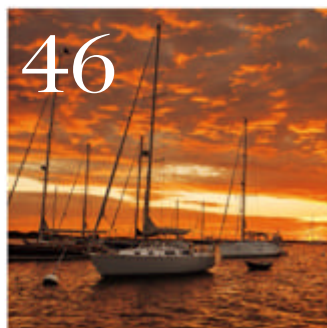
Features

36 The Best Yet

The delivery of a Swan 57 from Newport, Rhode Island, to a sailing school in France, with a stopover in the Azores, becomes the sail of a lifetime.
By Elaine Lembo

46 A Blissful Backyard Romp

An on-the-go couple discovers how easy it is to chill when there's nothing to do but savor the ride aboard a crewed charter sailboat.
By Annie Sherman



On the Cover

The crew takes it easy on a breezy day as a Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 53 flies off on a reach.
Photo Courtesy of Jeanneau



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History for Rent



Mark
Pillsbury

Should Middletown, Rhode Island, sailor Geordie Shaver cross paths with *American Pickers* Mike Wolfe and Frank Fritz in some waterfront bar, I'm guessing those boys might tip their caps and buy him a beer. History channel's two prime-time antiquers, after all, know a good find when they see one, and Geordie found himself a doozy: the mahogany and teak wheelhouse that was added to and later removed from Sir Thomas Lipton's storied J-Class sloop *Shamrock V*.

So, where do you accidentally stumble across a piece of the 1930 America's Cup challenger, the graceful sloop that crossed the Atlantic only to be bested by *Enterprise* in the waters off Newport in the fifth and final try by Sir Tea to take the Auld Mug home?

Well, in this case, it would be on Old Baptist Road in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, where Geordie was driving en route to a carpet store one day four years ago. Geordie knows boats. He's sailed in a handful of America's Cup campaigns and pulled strings on a lot of other craft over the years, including aboard *Shamrock's* J-Class rival, *Ranger*, the New York Yacht Club defender that beat *Endeavor II* in 1937 — the last time J-Class yachts raced for the Cup.

As Geordie drove around a corner, there on the side of the road was the wheelhouse, propped up on a couple of boards. The blue tarp that minutes before covered it had just blown off, exposing the treasure beneath. Geordie says the property owner found the wheelhouse in a shed when he bought the place, and had dragged it out to the side of the road to get it out of his way. He told Geordie he wasn't sure what it was, but thought it came off a boat named *Shamrock*, and yes, he'd be more than willing to part with it.

Back home, Geordie told his wife, Heather, about the find. Their first thought was to drag the wheelhouse home and turn it into a playhouse for the kids. Don't spend more than \$1,000 on it,



A refit in Newport, Rhode Island, returned *Shamrock V* to her racing lines. For Heather and Geordie Shaver the J-House (newportjhouse.com) is all about fun.

was Heather's plea.

Back on Old Baptist Road, Geordie offered \$500. The owner was thinking a grand. Geordie countered with \$999. "I told my wife I wouldn't spend \$1,000," he said.

Sold.

The wheelhouse was loaded onto a trailer and brought to the Shavers' backyard. At some point, Geordie got the idea that rather than a den for kids, the structure should be raised a foot or so and left on wheels for a traveling party place they'd call the J-House.

In the years since, they've done a good deal of digging into how this piece of maritime history landed in their laps.

After losing the 14th America's Cup, Lipton gave up his quest to outsail the New York Yacht Club, and *Shamrock* was sold. In 1937, she ended up in the hands of Italian publisher Mario Crespi, who renamed her *Quadrifoglio*. At the outbreak of World War II she was moved to a hay barn in the Italian Alps and hidden to keep her from being scrapped for her steel frame and parts. After the war, Crespi did a major refit of the boat, adding bulwarks and a larger wheelhouse, along with new engines and a bird's-eye maple interior. The boat was sold to another Italian in 1969, and eventually came full circle in 1985, when the

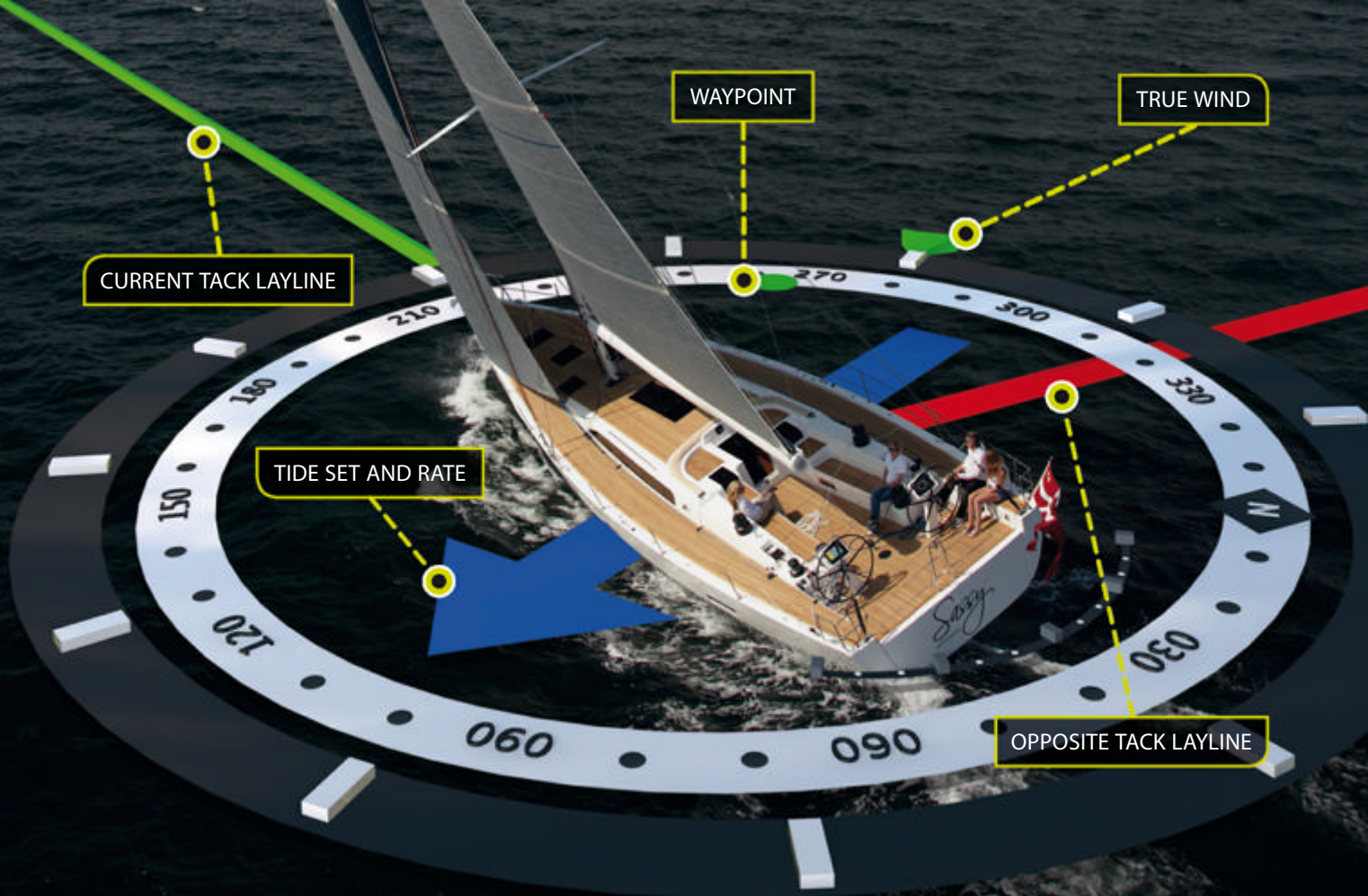


Lipton family bought her back, donated her to the Museum of Yachting in Newport and renamed her *Shamrock V*. In a restoration overseen by Patron Saint of Wooden Boats Elizabeth Meyer, *Shamrock* was returned to her sleek racing lines, and the oversize wheelhouse, along with the bulky bulwarks, were removed.

The house sat on Newport's Bannister's Wharf for several seasons, serving as a ticket and T-shirt kiosk, but was eventually removed and stashed away in the North Kingstown shed for a decade before Geordie took his fateful car ride to the carpet store.

These days, you're apt to see the varnished J-House at Newport Polo, where it's often rented out for upscale tailgating. Geordie delivers it on its custom trailer; all you have to do is bring the food and booze. Or you might find it down at Surfer's End on Second Beach, with the Shavers inside entertaining while the kids cut up the waves. Friends and the curious stop by to visit, and word of the J-House spreads.

"It's like the party in the kitchen," Heather says, describing the scene at the J-House. "People love to be in it."



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Pipe Dreams

A spectacular setting awaits those who persevere through
a thorough thrashing Down Under.

They're known as the Organ Pipes, the towering columns of dolerite rock that flank the steeps of Mount Wellington on the Australian island state of Tasmania. Geologists say the distinctive spires were born during the planet's Jurassic period, specifically when Tasmania separated from Antarctica in the breakup of the supercontinent known as Gondwana. These days, the pinnacles attract countless rock climbers who test themselves on routes like Lost World, New World and the Teardrop Wall. And once a year, they also lure a different sort of outdoor adventurer: the sailors competing in the annual ocean-racing classic known as the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Perhaps fittingly, the Organ Pipes are the visual and maybe

even spiritual reward near the conclusion of the 635-nautical-mile race. In other words, you need to put some 600 miles — often extremely wet and difficult ones — in your wake before the piercing peaks materialize through the mist. Many competitors in the Sydney Hobart have done literally dozens of editions of the iconic event, so they know what to expect as they close in on the finish line (see “Wizards of Oz,” page 98). Up until then, those Pipes are little more than a pipe dream.

All of the world's great ocean races, including the Newport Bermuda Race and the Fastnet Race, cover roughly the same distance. And each course has its own unique challenges. To score well in the dash from Newport, Rhode Island, to the isle



of Bermuda, you need to successfully negotiate the eddies and meanders spinning off the Gulf Stream, the rather major oceanic feature that bisects the route. To find glory in the Fastnet, the idea is to play to perfection the often fickle breezes and ripping currents in the Solent, the English Channel and at Fastnet Rock, the striking promontory off the coast of Ireland for which the race is named.

But the Sydney Hobart Race is another beast altogether, with three very separate and difficult sections to test the skill and wits of navigators, tacticians and crewmen. The first third of the race takes sailors out through the famous Sydney Heads and down the shoreline of New South Wales on the wings of a

The Kaiko 50 Merlin roars past Tasmania's Organ Pipes in the last miles of the 2014 Rolex Sydney Hobart Race. Merlin's skipper, 80-year-old David Forbes, qualifies as a Wizard of Oz (see page 98).

powerful, southerly flowing coastal current to Bass Strait. The second leg, through the strait, also known as "the Paddock," is smack dab in the Roaring Forties, where wild winds can rake the fleet. Finally, competitors must be on top of their game as they work their way down the coast of Tasman Island, then up the Derwent River to the finish line off Hobart.

But just before finishing is that glimpse of the Organ Pipes. And if you've gotten that far, you're already a winner.

Herb McCormick

Mailbag

Clean It Up, Cap'n Fatty

I have been a fan of your magazine for many years and have enjoyed reading Fatty Goodlander's column, On Watch. Lately, however, Fatty's attempts at humor have passed into racism. His stereotyping of Indonesia and its inhabitants ("Zen and Diesel In Indonesia," January 2015) has become downright offensive. I realize that this fact may have eluded your largely wealthy, almost exclusively white readership, but someone should remind Mr. Goodlander (and his editor) that we live in an increasingly pluralistic world here in the 21st century, and his poking fun at the "natives" is in poor taste.

I hope that Fatty cleans up his act at least as well as he cleans up his diesel.

Louis Benjamin
VIA EMAIL

Cap'n Fatty replies: *Thank gosh for your letter: I was worried my column had gotten too vanilla! But perhaps you are right; I should worry more about offending. Perhaps the readers of Cruising World don't need any Third World cruising reality, even if it's sprinkled with wit and leavened with humor. Maybe I should play it safe, and pretend that refueling in Indonesia is just like refueling at Bahia Mar in Fort Lauderdale.*

Don't Dial That Number

The "BOTY Specs at a Glance" chart that accompanied Boat of the Year coverage in the January 2015 issue included a wrong number for Hanse Yachts. The correct phone number is 978-239-6568.

Right Movie, Wrong Producer

In Herb McCormick's review of the new documentary about solo sailor Matt Rutherford ("Zero to Hero," January 2015), co-producer Stephanie Slewka was misidentified. Our apologies to Stephanie. For more on the movie, visit the film's website (reddotontheocean.com).



In 2012, along with her husband and two daughters, Heather Tiszai cruised the Bahamas aboard their 32-foot Bristol sloop, *Mi Cielito*. She and her family were saddened by the lack of diverse and healthy food available to island residents and visitors — but not surprised. Little had changed since the years when Heather worked as a sailboat captain for International Field Studies, a nonprofit educational and scientific organization established to promote and assist teachers with field study programs. At that time she hosted students on sailing expeditions around Andros and the Exuma islands, teaching marine and island ecology. From this experience she knew about the impact of conventional farming techniques on marine ecosystems.

Returning home to Bellingham, Washington, Heather founded Growing Alliances for Sustainable Agriculture (GASA) with an aim to promote agricultural improvements in the islands. Parlaying her firsthand experience with Bahamian culture and her established relationships, Heather identified a core group of island farmers, businesses and residents interested in working toward sustainable agricultural initiatives. Her vision for GASA is to support these leaders, providing both resources and information for communities to move forward: "We're already working with schools to design permaculture-style gardens, examples modeled after natural ecosystems and that highlight traditional Bahamian crops. Our workshops for farmers cover soil building, organic pest control and developing island resources to facilitate sustainable agriculture."

She adds that this is an important time to do this work. "The Bahamian government is interested in developing Andros Island as an agricultural resource for the entire country. Over the next year, our grass-roots efforts are geared toward giving these resources direction — because how they approach this will affect the health of the local population and economy, as well as the environment."

Heather is working toward a future in which cruisers who venture to the Bahamas will find the tiny stores stocked not just with pasta and drinks made from high-fructose corn syrup, but with freshly picked mangoes, Bahamian-grown pineapples and maybe even soursop. For more information about GASA, log on to the website (growingalliances.org).

Michael Robertson

Heather Tiszai and fellow cruisers look forward to the day when local produce, everything from mangoes to watermelons, will flourish in the Bahamas.

Green Wakes: Do you know a sailor or group working to make a change for the better?

Let us know about them by dropping a line to editor@cruisingworld.com.

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S33



S35



S38



S41



S44



S60



PASSAGE NOTES

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THREE UNDER THREE

Moving back aboard a boat after a time ashore is no small feat under normal circumstances. Doing it with three kids under 3 years old? That's a whole different story.

After a year in the Chicago suburbs, the Meyers crew of *Asante* — Scott, Brittany, and their daughters, Isla, Mira and Haven — are back aboard their Brewer 44 in Tortola, British Virgin Islands.

"Despite trying to be minimalists, we have no fewer than seven bags coming down with us," Brittany said in a recent blog post. "That is not including the three 15 x 15 x 15-inch boxes we shipped already. When it comes to babies on boats, you gotta have equipment."

How will the family of five adjust to being on board? Follow along on their blog, *Windtraveler*. cruisingworld.com/1503windtraveler

NAME THAT WIRE

Are the wires on your boat labeled? If not, they should be. But

what's the best way to do that? ABYC educator and marine systems



expert Ed Sherman recommends printed heat-shrink labels, but even writing on the wire with a Sharpie will work. cruisingworld.com/1503edsboattips

SAIL FOR A CAUSE

Over three days in January, Offshore Sailing School welcomed 50 sailors and guests for a weekend of competitive sailing to raise money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. For the regatta, amateur sailors had the opportunity to sail with legends of the sport: Gary Jobson, Dawn Riley, Ed Baird and Mark Reynolds. Steve Colgate, co-owner of Offshore Sailing School, said this fun event raised \$10,000 for LLS. cruisingworld.com/1503offshore

Canal, Ho!

Thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-three. My finger tapped the horizon. Thirty-four, thirty-five, thirty-six. What had started as a few hulking forms on the horizon became a dozen, and the dozen multiplied until we counted 37 freighters. That's right, 37 looming obstacles to dodge aboard *Namani*, our 35-foot Dufour sloop, in its approach to the Panama Canal. And that number included only freighters waiting outside the entrance. How many more were about to emerge from behind the breakwater? Terrifying? Exhilarating? I'm still not sure which. There were ships weighing anchor, ships dropping anchor, and ships holding position for imminent action, smoke drifting from their exhaust stacks. I couldn't help but imagine a video game in which tiny sailboats attempt to dodge oncoming ships. For us, the Canal wasn't just a gateway to a wide new ocean, but an adventure in itself. And though at times we felt like hapless fans plonked straight into the melee of an NBA court (time out — please?),

we also reveled in the knowledge that a long-held dream was coming true. We would not only witness the awesome spectacle of the Canal, but actually become part of it too. Happily, all went well when our compact sloop finally transited the



isthmus alongside the titans of the shipping world. And once the locks opened on the Pacific side, well, our next adventure could begin.

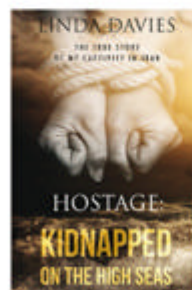
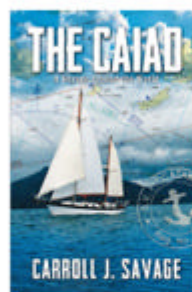
Nadine Slavinski

Editor's note: Watch the live cameras in the canal (www.pancanal.com).

GOOD BOOKS

The Caiad: A Voyage Around the World by Carroll J. Savage (2014; Koehler Books; \$30).

You'll want to set aside some time to finish this 700-plus-page account of a decade-long voyage. The author, a lawyer, drew from his own transformation from novice to seasoned offshore sailor for the tale. The tome includes a guide to the three principal sections, footnotes, glossary and specifications of *Piscataway*, the 45-foot custom ketch that's the platform for the adventure. No matter your focus, you're bound to learn something new and find inspiration in the bountiful asides. *Rick Martell*



Hostage: Kidnapped on the High Seas by Linda Davies (2014; Vigliano Books; \$13)

In 1998, Davies and her husband left their three young children with a sitter and set sail aboard their 38-foot catamaran from their home in Dubai for an overnight getaway to the island of Abu Musa, in the Persian Gulf. On the way, they were approached by an Iranian gunboat, their sailboat was confiscated and they were taken as suspected spies. Davies shares the harrowing details of their imprisonment and the aftermath. *Hostage* is light on nautical adventure, but a good read nonetheless.

Michael Robertson



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PASSAGE NOTES

FACEBOOK.COM/CRUISINGWORLD

No doubt about it — sunrise and sunset are easily the most photographed times of the day aboard a boat. Here are some great shots from around the cruising world.



Check out this sunset near Bodrum, Turkey, taken during a gulet cruise.

E.S.



It's certainly a lovely evening for sailing off Beachy Head, England.

S.B.



Sunrise is special on the return trip from Hawaii after the 2014 Pacific Cup Race.

M.K.



What More Could a Hungry Sailor Want?

Famous for its beautiful location and secure anchorage, warm welcome and mammoth Kawau burgers, the Kawau Island Yacht Club was built in 1951 by the people of the island on land donated by a local boatbuilding family. It once boasted the largest membership of any yacht club in the southern hemisphere. Due to changing times, the buildings and land were taken over by the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron and it became, in effect, a Squadron outstation. A dwindling island population meant ever lower winter usage, and financial setbacks for the Squadron added to the stress of keeping the club open. In April 2014 it was officially closed and the land and buildings offered for sale.

A core group of five island residents and three very interested sailors from the mainland became determined to ensure that the land and buildings continued to be the center of island life and a fun refuge for sailors

ISLANDERS AND SAILORS WERE DETERMINED THAT THE CLUB WOULD REMAIN THE CENTER OF ISLAND LIFE.

who cruise and fish in the beautiful, island-studded Hauraki Gulf, which stretches from Auckland out to Great Barrier Island. Long and sometimes difficult negotiations with the Squadron and other parties paved the way for what has now become the Kawau Boating Club.

A completely autonomous club, open to all but with special discount prices and benefits for those who become members, it reopened the café and bar Dec. 6, 2014, under the direction of professional café managers. Diesel and gas, fresh water, hot showers plus a book lending library are now available. Because the club has been designated as the official community hall for Kawau islanders, overseas cruising sailors are sure to meet local folks if they stop in for a visit.

And the famous Kawau Burger is once again available. With or without the optional fried egg, it's a tasty mouthful.

Lin Pardey

On opening day of the new Kawau Boating Club, the famous S&S-designed, Kiwi-built Sapphire sailed in for the festivities. The burgers are awesome too.



A far cry from its sleepy fishing-village past, Puerto Chiapas, Mexico, now has a brand-new marina and boatyard, freight terminal and cruise-ship docks. The marina offers a welcome respite for northbound cruisers who are waiting out the infamous winds of the Gulf of Tehuantepec.

BIG CHANGES COME TO A SOUTHERN MEXICO TOWN

Fifteen years ago, while delivering a Swan 51 from Marina del Rey, California, to Palm Beach, Florida, my crew and I stopped in a sleepy little fishing-boat port called Puerto Madero in southern Mexico near the Guatemala border. We needed to clear out of Mexico and top up our fuel as we headed south in light airs for Panama. It was quite an adventure. We anchored just inside the jetties near the beach-side schoolhouse — actually more of a school roof, as it lacked walls — and flagged down a panga (the local open fishing boat, about 18 feet long). The mate went aboard with a dozen or so jerry cans, and off he went to get a taxi to the nearest gas station, about 10 miles away. Several hours later he returned in the same panga laden with full jugs of diesel, and we were off.

The thatched-roof school is still there and the students still swim in the harbor at recess, but the place is sleepy no more. The town's name has been changed to Puerto Chiapas, a new freight terminal and cruise ship docks have been built, and there's a Pemex fuel dock just past the fishermen's

wharf, with 26 feet of water all the way to it. Best of all, a brand-new, state-of-the-art marina and boatyard have been carved out of the sand and mangroves nearby.

The approach depth in the well-marked channel to the marina at low tide (according to our depth sounder) was at least 15 feet — more than adequate for the 11-foot draft of the Swan 59 we were delivering. Two dock hands and assistant manager Memo Garcia met us and took our lines as we backed in. Marina Chiapas boasts good, reliable power and water on wide concrete docks. Memo speaks perfect English and kindly called the port captain and other authorities to arrange for the paperwork that every yacht crew must wade through when it arrives and departs a Mexican port. The officials were friendly enough, and with the ordeal soon over, we were able to repair to the bar.

A sky-scraping thatched roof keeps the rain off patrons of Baõs restaurant, and a lack of walls allows the light breezes to keep things relatively cool. Lots of comfy chairs and big tables complete the really pleasant surround-

ings. Delectable local dishes include the salsa prepared at the table and served in bowls carved from lava harvested from the nearby volcano; the excellent steak served with refried beans, salad and guacamole; and the perfect margaritas — *con sal* — that washed everything down. Suffice it to say that it's a great place for cruisers to hang out — cheap too!

We arrived at Marina Chiapas at the end of the off season — late October — and there were signs of life at the boatyard as earlybirds readied their boats for launching with the 60-ton travel lift after a hot summer in storage. It's also a good place for northbound cruisers to check in to Mexico and wait out the notorious Tehuantepecer, or Tehuano winds that occasionally rage in the Gulf of Tehuantepec. Stock up too on locally grown rainforest-certified coffee from Cafe Loma Real. It's delicious.

Short-term dockage when we were there was 80 cents a foot per night; 50 cents a foot per night was the monthly rate. For details contact the marina (www.marina-chiapas.com).

Andrew Burton

Sweet Salad in Paradise

By Ed Dugan



Marinated Artichoke, Pepper & Olive Salad




- 2 14-ounce jars or cans artichoke hearts, drained (or use frozen)
- 1 12-ounce jar roasted red peppers, drained
- 1 12-ounce jar Kalamata olives, pitted or whole, drained
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 5 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon ($\frac{1}{3}$ cup) extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar*
- 3 tablespoons honey
- * or a bit less, to taste

In a colander, drain artichokes, olives and peppers very well. Cut artichoke hearts into quarters or halves and place in a large bowl. Add olives. Dice peppers coarsely and add to bowl. Season with oregano.

Stir gently to combine ingredients. In a separate bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar and honey, and taste to adjust tartness or sweetness. Add to salad, stir gently and marinate, covered, for several hours or overnight. Stir occasionally to evenly distribute marinade. Serve alone, or using the suggestions above.

This salad will keep in the fridge for a week or more.

Serves four as a main course; eight as a side salad.

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I'd dreamed about cruising full time for years, and finally decided it was now or never. I resigned my college presidency. My wife, Lynne, and I moved to Florida, lived cheaply aboard a houseboat, and began to build our sailboat — a Creekmore 34 — from scratch. (I knew we were on the right path one morning when a guy in a boat that had pulled in while we slept said hello. I asked him what he did for a living. He said he sang a little. Turned out it was Jimmy Buffett!)

We worked hard, laying the hull, making the keel and then finishing the boat ourselves. Lynne, a certified master sailmaker, made all the sails. After we christened *Ramblin' Lady*, we cast off from land life and went cruising. Lynne did all our navigating. I did all the cooking.

We cruised the Bahamas and parts of the Caribbean, mostly avoiding well-known destinations and frequenting smaller harbors or out islands. One of our favorite places to linger was about midway down the Exuma Islands chain, fairly close to Staniel Key. Trying to catch dinner, I'd dive into one of the many snapper holes, see a wall of hundreds of fish, shoot my spear — and hit not a single one. They disappeared as if I'd flipped off a light switch.

When you're cruising in the islands, even if you're lucky at fishing, it's often very hard to get fresh salad ingredients. Eventually I came up with this tasty alternative to fresh salad, made with only canned or jarred ingredients. It's delicious as a stand-alone salad, but you can make it a hearty chilled meal by adding pasta, or add it to a bean salad for more variety. No matter how you eat it, it's guaranteed to satisfy your salad cravings.

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Lynda Morris Childress



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Slinging It in Singapore

A year's sail across the Pacific is nothing when it comes time to make sure the grandkid learns the ropes around boats.



Cap'n Fatty
Goodlander

"I love it here on the mooring in Singapore," I told Stanley, my new Chinese sailing friend from the nearby neighborhood of Tampines. We were sitting in the cockpit of *Ganesh*, my ketch-rigged Amphitrite 43 that hails from the Virgin Islands. It was the first time Stanley had been on an ocean-going yacht. He was agog.

"It's so peaceful here in Changi Village, especially at dawn," I said. "I'm awakened each day by the birds on the beach. It's almost unbelievable to me, the quiet serenity in the midst of this hustling, bustling city.

"I've never felt safer," I told him. "I'm in one of the world's most densely populated cities, and there's no theft, no violent crime, hell, not even graffiti! A woman can walk anywhere, at any time, and never worry about her purse or personal safety. This is unheard of. But what I love most about Singapore is this pristine, uncrowded beach and its utter tranquility," I said, pointing toward the shore. "It's as if this place is outside of time; as if nothing bad can happen here."

Stanley grimaced. I didn't under-

stand why.

"How you Americans say," he asked sadly, "baptized in blood?"

But I've gotten ahead of myself. A couple of years ago, when my daughter, Roma Orion, came to visit us in the Caribbean, she asked if we'd rendezvous with her and our granddaughter, Sokú Orion, in S'pore, as the locals call it, at the end of 2014. She and her husband had enjoyed their time living in Amsterdam, but they were getting itchy feet.

"I miss the tropics," Roma Orion said. She'd grown up, after all, in the Lesser Antilles. "And besides, Sokú Orion needs to learn the ways of the sea. Are you up for it, Cap'n Daddy-O?"

"Your wish is my command," I said.

Between then and now, and there and here, of course, lay the vast Pacific. Despite having already puddle-jumped it a number of times, we lovingly crossed its deep blue waters again in 2013. We especially had a blast in New Zealand during the summer Christmas season. (Yes, residing in the southern hemi while being north-hemi-centric occasionally gets confusing, like, exactly how warm is that north wind?)

As I write this, we'd just transited

the windy Torres Straits and meandered through Indonesia for over four months, before arriving off the coast of Singapore.

Upon arrival, we immediately faced three problems: You can't anchor-out in S'pore; all the very expensive marinas were full; and clearing into the country isn't a government procedure to be entered into lightly. The coast of Singapore is more tightly controlled than the Louvre, Buckingham Palace, Fort Knox and the White House — combined. You have to notify the authorities in writing 24 hours in advance of your arrival, and then meet a government boat at an exact time and lat/long offshore. This is not easy for a laid-back sea gypsy who threw away his calendar in the late '60s.

There's no varying from the country's stringent step-by-step immigration procedure. And the penalties are severe: Fines, canings and jail terms are regularly awarded to mariners approaching the coast in too lax a manner. Recently, when a sailor from Australia became confused by which shoreline was

Ganesh finds a quiet mooring and gorgeous beach in the midst of bustling Singapore.

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Malaysia's and which was Singapore's, more aquatic law-enforcement craft descended upon him than he knew existed in the whole watery world. It might sound crazy, but if you've got more than two packs of chewing gum aboard, you'd best be able to document that it's for personal use only. They're that strict.

So from my cruising perspective, what was I to do? The authorities wouldn't let us into the country unless we went to a marina, but no marinas had any room, and worse, I hate marinas — and needlessly spending money. Even more, I hate for-profit, yachtie-snotty marinas that mislabel themselves yacht clubs, as if we sea gypsies were too dumb to know the difference.

Enter Facebook.

"Huh," you say?

You know, Facebook. Besides visiting Singapore, my daughter also insisted that I open a Facebook account so I could keep up with the daily happenings of my grandchild. And since I had my page, I figured I might as well post a joke or two. Soon I had friends, lots



The women in the Cap'n's life include Carolyn, Sokú Orion and Roma Orion.

and lots of friends. Then I started noticing a weird thing: I'd arrive at a foreign port and people would know I was there almost before I did. It was unnerving. One month I unexpectedly dropped the hook off the small village of Lovina, along Bali's north coast. While Carolyn was still doing her anchoring house-keeping on the foredeck, I switched

on my iPad to discover that a high-res photo had been posted on Facebook of us doing exactly that. We'd only been there, say, two minutes and already the whole world knew? Cyberspace is infiltrating my cruising world more and more. Is there no coastal "alone" left on this planet?

That's the bad news. The good news is that many of our Facebook friends in Singapore really, really wanted to see us, and were members of the fabled Changi Sailing Club.

I quickly discovered that the Changi Sailing Club is exactly what the name implies: a nonprofit group of 700 sailors who banded together to promote and enjoy their sport. There is no club marina, only a few scattered moorings, and a lovely post-colonial clubhouse. The club was started in 1936 and looks like a movie set from *The King and I*. In a setting like this, Bogart and Bacall might kiss on the veranda. At the bar, a mysterious Greta Garbo could lean in and ask you to light her Turkish cigarette. It's pure magic, with a certain blend of

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Joining it wouldn't be so much a matter of acceptance and dues as it would be a step into another historical dimension of Chinese opulence, modern-day sailing competitions and S'pore savvy.

Obviously, I was sailing into uncharted territory. I'm fairly sure Joshua Slocum wasn't on Facebook, but in his day, I understand the good captain had a bit of the hustler, along with being a shrewd Yankee trader. I point this out to note that each generation of offshore sailors must do what they must do to survive in the world in which they sail. So I called out the Facebook troopers in Singapore to rush down to the CSC and plead my case with the powers that be.

I have no idea what was said, only that general manager Edwin Low almost instantly became a Fatty friend. "Don't worry 'bout a thing, Fatty," he said when I called him on Skype to inquire about moorage while dodging freighters in the busy Malacca Straits. "We're flexible.

Welcome to Singapore, and welcome to the Changi Sailing Club!"

It's as if yours truly wrote the club's rules. No power craft of any type is allowed. There are no tennis courts, gym or steam room. The sole focus is sailing. There are a spacious clubhouse with a large dinghy area and a members-only shipyard, a friendly bar, a cheap restaurant and an air-conditioned library/lounge/office. Most of the staff has wet butts — the highest kudo I can give a community sailing organizer. By that I mean they are actually in the water sailing with the kids. And then there's the popular swimming pool, the large (bicycle) parking lot, commodious showers, the long dinghy dock, and all tipping is against club rules.

Heaven!

I haven't even mentioned the best part: the constant on-the-water entertainment. We moored in the mouth of the funnel-like channel along S'pore's northeast shore. Dozens, and occasionally hundreds, of commercial craft silently slid by our vessel hourly. It was

a never-ending state-of-the-art show of modern shipping. Every morning, there was the ballet of the sand barges. During our midmorning coffee break, there were the tug tango, the ship shuffle and the crew-boat blow-bys. Lunch usually offered up a car carrier or a container ship, while the afternoon kayakers and Optimist pram skippers jousted with the odd passing tanker.

And no, there were no wakes, as the 5-knot speed limit isn't suggested, it's an ironclad Singaporean rule.

Carolyn and I were having a blast. I had an old nonfunctioning microphone from my NPR radio days in the cockpit, and often amused our guests by doing commentary on the passing commercial traffic. I used my one-octave-lower FM-radio announcer's voice: "And now, on the starboard side, for your viewing pleasure is an LPG carrier from Hong Kong; just astern, a junk-rigged fishing vessel from India and a lateen-rigged trading dhow from the Mideast."

Within a five-minute walk of the club there was a giant food court, with a



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hundred hawker stalls that pump out good, filling meals for \$2 or \$3, and gourmet fare in the \$4 range. Carolyn quipped happily, "In Singapore, if you're cooking, you're losing money!" I was particularly partial to all the fresh-fruit stalls that sell healthy drinks to go. I couldn't seem to make it through the day without a fresh carrot juice or two.

"Best of all," said Carolyn, "is to be living and thriving in the magic gateway to Asia Incorporated."

That's kinda what S'pore is: a glimpse into our planet's urban future. Carolyn took our 4-year-old granddaughter, Sokú Orion, almost daily for free kiddie concerts, contests and educational events. One day, I sat at the National

Museum with Paul Theroux as he regaled us about his writing of *Saint Jack* in the Singapore of the late 1960s. Ballet in the park? Classical music on the beach? Poetry slams, anyone? Literary contests in the nation's four major languages, with a \$4,000 grand prize? Free music? Even the astronomy competition had a poetry component! There's even tai chi in the park at dawn!

Yes, Carolyn and I love deserted Chagos, empty Beveridge and desolate Minerva, but we also love having our cruising home right in the heart of cities like New York, Boston, Miami, Chicago, Auckland, Sydney, Darwin, Capetown and, yes, Singapore.

To me, the best of all is learning the intimate details and gritty aspects of a new, blossoming culture. I asked my Chinese friend, Stanley, what religion S'pore is and he didn't hesitate to say, matter-of-factly, "Capitalist."

One day, Carolyn and I were chatting on the subway that the locals refer to as the MRT, and an old crone overheard us. As she left the train, she cried out in warning or celebration, "In Singapore, you make money or die!"

Which brings us to the grimace on Stanley's face as we chatted in the cockpit. I had to pull it out of him. Singaporeans are endlessly upbeat. Their future is bright. Tomorrow is their day. What, exactly, was it about my mooring comment that made him sad?

"Right here on Changi Beach," he said, "30,000 of my countrymen were slaughtered by the Japanese in February 1942. The water ran red. As a nation, we aspire to forgive; but as a people, we can never forget."

There was a moment of silence. Asia is filled with such surprises.

All this semi-innocent sailor knows is that the Changi Sailing Club is among the most welcoming, most cordial, friendliest sailing organizations on Earth, and comes at a cost that is less than half of what my daughter's condo charges for a monthly parking space.

Ah, the many mysteries of sailing Singapore, where East and West meet with mutual respect, admiration and puzzlement.

Fatty and Carolyn are currently working on various projects while moored at the Changi Sailing Club, and teaching Sokú Orion her knots.

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The aluminum-hulled Pelagic Australis, conceived by long-distance sailor and mountaineer Skip Novak for high-latitude sailing, is well suited and equipped for the ice (top left). They found plenty of it, both at sea (top right) and ashore (above left), hiking at Deception Island. The research station at Port Lockroy is now home to a gift shop, museum and post office (bottom right).



Peter L. Murray

For adventurous sailors, the northern Antarctic Peninsula is one of the world's last unspoiled cruising grounds. Last February, I was part of a group of eight who chartered *Pelagic Australis*, the 73-foot aluminum sloop designed for high-latitude sailing expeditions by Skip Novak, legendary long-distance sailor and mountaineer. Brawny as its owner, rugged and equipped with a big Cummins diesel,

Pelagic Australis is cutter rigged with genoa, yankee and staysail, all on roller furlers with lines leading to the cockpit. The 800-pound mainsail carries four reefs and can be reduced to the size of a handkerchief.

We spent more than three weeks crossing the turbulent waters of Drake Passage, threading our way among icebergs and islets along the Antarctic coast and then recrossing the Passage via Cape Horn.

The cruise started in Puerto Williams,

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WAYPOINTS



Chile, on the Beagle Canal. We met *Pelagic Australis* tied up at the *Micalvi*, a grounded Chilean navy supply vessel that serves as the Puerto Williams Yacht Club.

Soon enough, we were underway on a 650-mile crossing of Drake Passage, one of the most inhospitable bodies of water on Earth, known for its large and unpredictable seas and successions of storm-laden lows. We dosed ourselves with Stugeron, the powerful motion-sickness medicine. The weather gods were good to us. Although some of us were a bit green at various times, we all made the four-day passage without losing our cookies.

Our Antarctic landfall was

Deception Island, a sunken crater once the site of whaling and sealing stations, now abandoned and desolate. There, in Whalers Bay, we experienced our first Antarctic storm. During the day the wind increased to the 50s with gusts over 65 knots. Our anchor and 350 feet of heavy chain couldn't hold us on the narrow shelf under the crater wall. By nightfall we were idling under power in the middle of the caldera. As we drifted to leeward, once in a while one of us had to go out in the cockpit, rev up the engine and drive the boat to windward to gain drifting room. Then we could sit tight again. It was a long night.

But storms pass. A day later

RESOURCES

Antarctica charter opportunities include:

Skip Novak's Pelagic Expeditions (www.pelagic.co.uk)

Expedition Sail (www.expeditionsail.com)

For more details about Port Lockroy, consult:

Antarctic Heritage Trust (www.ukaht.org)

we were nosing south among snow-crowned peaks on islands and mainland, nudging small icebergs and spotting seals, whales and, of course, penguins in abundance. We launched the Zodiac and a couple of kayaks to explore.

Our first major destination was Port Lockroy, a former British research station on tiny Goudier Island, in front of the large glaciers of Wiencke Island. The huts of the former research station are now a museum, a post office and a gift shop managed by the Antarctic Heritage Trust. Port Lockroy is a mandatory stop for cruise ships along the Antarctic Peninsula each summer. The proceeds of the gift shop support the

for Antarctic sailors because it's the site of the world's most southerly bar, the Vernadsky Station Lounge. We brought our own wine, but ended up drinking locally produced vodka with our Ukrainian hosts.

While at Vernadsky, an approaching low required us to tie up in a tiny cove on a nearby islet. *Pelagic Australis* has four large reels of Spectra cable to secure the vessel to boulders on the shore. Four corner ties plus the anchor make a classic Antarctic five-point moor, which kept us safe from winds of 40-plus knots. Although the Spectra lines were taut as bowstrings, they held.

The five-day trip back



Pelagic Australis lies at anchor in an ice-packed harbor near Port Lockroy (above). After crossing Drake Passage, the charter's first landfall was at Deception Island (map, opposite page).

historic-preservation program in the peninsula region.

From Port Lockroy we pushed south along the west side of the peninsula, through the "iceberg graveyard." The might of the crags, the whiteness of the snow — everywhere — and the extraordinary blues and greens of the icebergs made us gasp.

Our next destination was Vernadsky Research Station in the Argentine Islands, south of Anvers Island. Vernadsky is a prized destination

across Drake Passage to Puerto Williams was enlivened by a near collision with an iceberg on our first night out, and a race to shelter behind Cape Horn to beat an approaching low, which kicked up quite a wind and sea at the end. Par for the course with Antarctic cruising.

Peter L. Murray has cruised Serendipity, his 30-foot wooden schooner, along the Maine coast for nearly 50 years.



Billy Black photo

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Jimmy Cornell

The Blue Planet Odyssey round-the-world rally had its U.S. start on Jan. 10, when a group of five boats left Key West bound for Montego Bay. From Jamaica they will continue to the

San Blas Islands, where they will join five other crews who started from Marti-

nique. The combined fleet will then transit the Panama Canal together and meet up with two West Coast participants as they head off across the Pacific. Three other boats, late leaving from the East Coast, will catch up with the Odyssey in the Pacific, along with an additional five participants that will cross just the one ocean. For a while, at least, the fleet will be 20 strong.

Throughout their voyage, BPO participants will contribute to various oceanographic research projects by deploying drifter buoys as well as Argo floats. A few days before the start, Shaun Dolk, manager of NOAA's Drifter Operations Center in Miami, distributed 10 drifter buoys among the boats and briefed participants on the locations where they should be deployed once the boats reach the Pacific Ocean. These autonomous buoys are active for at least 450 days, transmitting data on currents, seawater temperature, barometric pressure, wind and salinity.

Terry and Dena Singh, who are starting the BPO from San Diego, will have on board their Amel 54, *Libby*, eight Argo

floats supplied by the Scripps Research Institute. They have been asked to deploy them at precise locations west of the Galapagos Islands. These state-of-the-art probes drift on the surface of the ocean before descending to a depth of 1,000 meters, and by changing their buoyancy, they dive to a depth of 2,000 meters every 10 days. Returning to the surface, they transmit by satellite all the vast data that has been collected before resuming the cycle.



NOAA's Shaun Dolk demonstrates how a drifter buoy is deployed from the deck of a sailboat (above). Participants on a cruising cat leave no doubt they're part of the rally.



COURTESY OF JIMMY CORNELL

Participants will also be active in several educational programs during their world voyage. This involves a number of schools in the U.S. and Canada. Dena Singh, for instance, has set up links with Wildcat Mountain Elementary School in the Singhs' hometown just outside Denver, Colorado. All the students in third through fifth grades will follow *Libby's* route around the world. The voyage of Anne and Jeff Posner on their Wauquiez 40, *Joyful*, will be keenly followed by students of Good Shepherd Academy in Alabama, as well as Round Hill Elementary School in Round Hill, Virginia.

Canadians Rob and Carol Harvey are sailing on *Maggie*, a Passport 470. Carol, a former science teacher, has arranged with teachers at Sam Sherratt Public School in Milton, Ontario, to use the resources provided by the BPO for projects involving fourth through sixth grades. The daughter of crewmember Bob Shanks is a teacher in Calgary, Alberta, and her school will also follow *Maggie's* progress.

Justin Smith and Meredith Dunning, sailing on the Baba 40 *Coconut Woman*, have been asked by geologists at the University of Texas to conduct observations



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Background: Gilles Martin-Raget/Team Alvimedica. From left: Corinna Halloran/Team SCA, Ainhoa Sanchez/Team Brunel, Ian Roman/Team Alvimedica, Yan Zedda/Team Dongfeng, Ian Roman/Team Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing, Guy Francis Vignale/Team MAPFRE, Ainhoa Sanchez/Team Vestas Wind.

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regarding the study of ancient tsunamis in the South Pacific. They've been tasked with asking locals if there are anomalous rocks that may have been carried inland by large tsunamis, such as the two boulders discovered in Tonga that are larger than the largest stones found at Krakatoa.

Jerry Schuster and Ginny Malmquist, sailing on the J 40 *Heron Reach*, have

actively worked to raise awareness about climate change in their community of Bellingham, Washington. They also have been active in their local Transition Movement, an international group dedicated to creating a more sustainable world. They have left their log home on 20 acres of forested land and are looking forward to a completely different and wondrous world on the sea, and a move

from 20 acres to 40 feet.

James Bellini, the owner of the Wind Náutica boatyard in Brazil, has sailed *Blue Wind* to the Caribbean to join the Martinique start. The world voyage will be a good test for this prototype of the new Wind 44 design conceived by the Argentinian naval architect Nestor Volker.

One BPO participant I've known since 1986, when he sailed in the first Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, is Zeke Holland. He teamed up with fellow software engineer Bill Dickson and doctor Tim Liveright to acquire *No Regrets*, an older Atlantic 42 catamaran. Tim spoke for all three when he said: "Our lifelong commitment to progressive social and environmental causes has found the perfect complement to our sailing passion by contributing to such a worthwhile mission that may shake a few folks loose from their complacent nonactivist moorings."

For Tim and Ceci King, who will be sailing *Ransom*, a 39-year-old Hinckley 49, "raising awareness for how disrespectfully we are treating our oceans is important to us," said Tim. "But equally, it is the adventure that attracts us."

Benjamin Riddle, sailing with Joseph Richardson on *Gypsy*, an Irwin 52, has set up links with the Lake Norman Yacht Club, based in Cornelius, North Carolina. Benjamin began sailing there at the age of 6 and ended up teaching and racing at the club throughout his younger years.

The rally also has set up links with schools in some of the places along the way, where sailors will be engaged in local community projects. With an array of special skills and professions that range from a car mechanic to teachers, software engineers, a boatbuilder, a farmer, video producers and medical doctors, we will be able to provide some practical help to the island communities we will visit. As this Odyssey will call at some places where people's lives are already affected by climate change, we want them to know that cruising sailors care for them and empathize with their concerns.

Cruising World editor at large Jimmy Cornell is the organizer of the Blue Planet Odyssey, in which he is participating aboard his Garcia Exploration 45, Aventura IV.



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Mexico's Galapagos

A dubious stop at Isla Isabel becomes a surprise delight.



Chris and Alena Rinke

We are not sure about this one. We are en route from Mazatlan to the town of San Blas, on Mexico's Pacific coast, on our 34-foot 1973 Columbia sailboat and have decided to try a stop at Isla Isabel, an island about 85 nautical miles southwest of Mazatlan and 45 nautical miles northwest of San Blas. The island is a national park, known as the "Mexican Galapagos" due to its high populations of green iguanas and nesting blue-footed boobies, brown boobies and magnificent frigate birds. Heermann's gulls, sooty terns, tropic birds and brown

pelicans are also supposed to be common visitors. There are no natural predators on the island, so the animals aren't afraid of people. It sounds wonderful, though we've heard the rocky sea bottom surrounding this island has "swallowed" more anchors than any other place in Pacific Mexico. Thus we approach Isabel with mixed feelings, but as we get close a good omen presents itself. In the late afternoon sun, two humpback whales propel their massive bodies out of the golden water and back-flop with a huge splash about a half-mile away. It's an amazing sight, especially since the whales are far enough out that we don't have to

worry about them hitting our boat. Soon after, we spot two sailboats in the east anchorage, another good sign since they wouldn't anchor there if they didn't like the spot. After crossing a rock shelf about 15 feet deep, we surprisingly find a sandy patch in 20 feet of water, close to two rocks called "Las Monas" (translation: the monkeys). Our anchor holds solid all night and we get a good night of sleep.

The next morning we find ourselves in the middle of what sounds like lunch break

in a high school cafeteria where everyone is talking at once. Except everyone has a relatively high pitched voice and all their words are coming out as squawks.

Upon landing with our dinghy on the island, we stumble upon a camp and meet Cesar and Patricia, volunteer researchers for a blue-footed booby monitoring program through the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Cesar is a veterinarian and Patricia is a biologist; both have volunteered two

Known as the "Mexican Galapagos," Isla Isabel is home to a variety of birds including blue-footed boobies (top left). Authors Chris and Alena spent a day with researchers from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (bottom left). Their Green Panther, a Columbia 34, lies at anchor close to Las Monas.

months of their time to mark nests, count eggs and chicks, and tag birds. At the camp are also two undergraduate students from the University, Andrea and Santiago; they are spending two weeks working on another blue-footed booby project. We are lucky to arrive on everyone's day off, and the researchers offer us a tour of the island.

Back on the beach, blue-footed boobies are everywhere; the early arrivals are already sitting on eggs or taking care of their recently hatched chicks, while the more recent arrivals are courting potential mates or walking the beach with their mate in search of a good nest site. We've just learned from Cesar and Patricia that sooty terns recently invaded a portion of the blue-footed boobies' nesting grounds.

Neither party sounds happy. Some boobies are holding their ground, but several have already abandoned their nests and eggs. Finding a good nest site is important. Our guides explain to us that the boobies are very territorial about their nests, and if they think a nest is too close, they may try and kick the egg out of the neighboring nest if it's left unattended to gain more space. This is why the invasion of sooty terns this year is causing such a ruckus; the terns are seriously crowding the boobies at one beach and stressing them out. Cesar and Patricia note that the terns typically don't nest on this island, but for some reason they decided to try it out this year. Luckily, the boobies still have a large portion of their nesting

grounds undisturbed. The blue footed boobies typically lay one or two eggs, though as many as four have been found in a nest. Another interesting fact we discover is that boobies are very sensitive to what "belongs" in their nest, and if they catch a whiff of anything foreign, even if it is their own egg or chick that has left the nest and is returned, they will attack it. Thus, when an egg is kicked out of a nest by a neighboring booby, the nest is usually abandoned.

We leave the beach and enter the scrubby, dense forest on a trail that leads to a fishing village on the south side of the island. We spy a couple more booby nests in the fringes of the forest, but soon all we see are frigate bird nests in the treetops. The frigate birds appear massive

after spending time with the boobies; their wingspan can reach more than 7 feet! As we walk through the forest we see several dead frigate birds, either on the ground or in the tree branches. Cesar and Patricia explain that the frigates are always searching for sticks for their nests; sometimes the birds fly too far into the dense forest to grab a stick and become entangled in the branches. Since their wingspan is so large, they can't free themselves and thus die in the forest.

Approaching the fishing village, the forest thins out and gives way to grassland with just a few trees here and there. Every treetop is covered with multiple frigate bird nests and some are even built on top of grass mounds. Males with their bright red throat pouches inflated like

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balloons are conspicuous everywhere. There are also many chicks with matted white feathers, making them look like they just woke up (which they may have). Our guides tell us the adults feed and care for their chicks for an entire year. That seems like a long-term commitment for a bird. (In contrast, a blue-footed booby chick fledges in around three to four months!) Unfortunately, the life of a frigate chick is also fraught with danger. For the chicks that are in nests above the forest floor, if they happen to fall out, their parents will not be able to reach them in the forest and the chicks will starve. Likewise, if an egg rolls out of a nest to the forest floor, it's a goner. Apparently, enough frigates survive though, so evolution hasn't deterred frigate birds

from building their nests in the forest canopy.

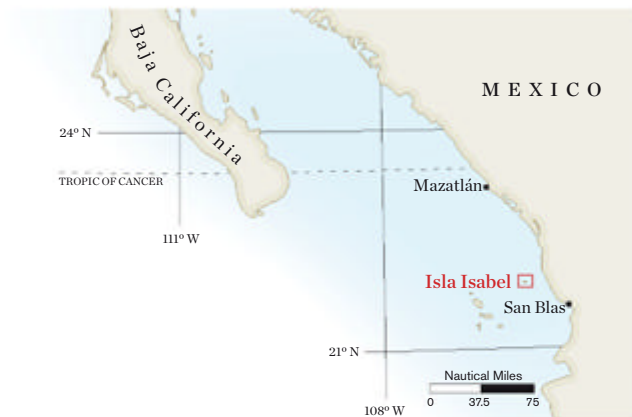
We continue past the village and up a hill to one of the best viewpoints on the island, where a lighthouse is erected. This also happens to be the only spot on the island where you can catch a cell signal, so Santiago and Andrea have brought their phones. From the top, we have a spectacular

view of the island; you could sit here for hours. There are also a few scattered brown- and blue-footed booby nests on the rocky ground, many with recently hatched fuzzy white chicks.

Back at the researcher's camp, we return to the turf war between the boobies and the terns. It will be interesting to see in coming years if

the terns continue to return or if this was just a one-time fluke. As we are all hot from the hike, we end the day snorkeling around the surrounding rocks. There are a lot of beautiful fish to see, but the birds are still foremost in our thoughts. We feel so lucky to have spent the day hanging out with the researchers and learning about the amazing bird life on Isla Isabel. One of the many things we love about cruising are the unexpected encounters with locals who are willing to teach us about the area we are traveling. This is a stop we won't soon forget.

After crossing the Pacific, biologists Chris and Alena Rinke are cruising Australia aboard their Columbia 34, Green Panther (greenpanther.org).



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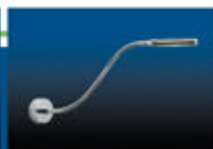
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DAYS AT SEA.

BY ELAINE LEMBO

IT all started over supper one night, though honestly, I can't remember which supper, or which night. A few hundred miles southeast of Newport, Rhode Island, aboard the *Swan 57 Flyer* – underway on a 3,100-nautical-mile passage to Brittany, France – our multinational crew of five was a focused bunch. At the moment, the focus was on food.

This is of course what happens when you're motorsailing with the iron jib chugging away. Begrudgingly, we'd grown accustomed to the ceaseless grumble of the Perkins 386, in the way die-hard campers function while mosquitoes buzz about their heads. Our trip, for the record, was a delivery job with a defined beginning, middle and end, not an open-ended cruise.

"Delicious!" proclaimed Swiss sailor Manfred Arnold.





In shakedown trials off Newport, Rhode Island, prior to a trans-Atlantic delivery voyage, the Swan 57 Flyer, already flying the French tricolor, has a bone in her teeth as she sails to weather.

"Tasty!" agreed Capt. Rick Martell.

"Perhaps the best I've ever made," came the proud admission from first mate and cook Todd Mennillo, who'd spent the previous month whipping up 21 dinners from scratch and freezing them in tidy containers.

"It's the best yet," confirmed our French crewmate, Xabi Lastapis, in a quiet, satisfied tone.

Was it the beef and broccoli? The 15-bean soup and biscuits? The sausage, peppers and sun-dried tomatoes?

Whatever the case, as *Flyer* pushed eastward, The Best Yet became our catchphrase.

Whether we were surfing down 20-foot waves with three reefs in the main or marveling over the antics of serenading dolphins, The Best Yet was the barometer of *Flyer's* trans-Atlantic voyage, the axiom in the remarks column of the ship's log to describe the ever-expanding quality of this adventure.

With such a well-found boat, excellent skipper and great crew, and no less than our own rallying cry, I could barely wait to squirm out of my bunk for every watch to see what would happen next.

After nearly three years on the hard at Hinckley Yacht Services in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, in the fall of 2013 *Flyer's* fate had taken a sudden, drastic turn. One day, my other half, Rick, who before this hiatus had for eight years been the boat's private skipper with winter duties delivering it and cruising the Caribbean at its owner's behest, got a call from Nautor Swan broker Keith Yeoman. A party was making queries about *Flyer*. Could he meet them at the boat?

By Halloween we learned that Jean-Paul Deloffre, owner of Blue Sailing, a school that offers the acclaimed British Royal Yachting Association Yachtmaster offshore curriculum, planned to enter *Flyer* into his fleet berthed at Port du Crouesty, France. Jean-Paul, we discovered, was a slight, attractive man in his early 50s who's endowed with the metabolism of a hummingbird and moves swiftly when he sees something he likes and wants. An accomplished sailor, "JP" reckoned *Flyer* would be the perfect platform for his school's offshore curriculum. He asked Rick to remain the boat's skipper for recommissioning and the trans-Atlantic voyage to its

WHEN I HEARD THE ITINERARY MY EARS PRICKED UP. AN OCEAN CROSSING. BIG WIND. WAVES. LANDFALL IN THE AZORES. PAINTING OUR NAME ON THE SEA WALL IN HORTA.

new home.

When I joined them for lunch on a raw fall day, JP and Rick were discussing suggested routes and poring over guidebooks and pilot charts. Conventional wisdom called for a late spring/early summer departure from Newport, at a latitude of roughly 41 degrees N, taking advantage of the prevailing westerlies before dropping southeast to about 40 degrees N, catching a lift from the Gulf Stream, and then making an easterly shot straight for the Azores. After refueling and reprovisioning, that 1,900-nautical-mile segment would be followed by a 1,200-nautical-mile climb northeast to France, skirting the Bay of Biscay and using Belle Île as a waypoint for the entrance to the Baie de Quiberon before finally reaching Crouesty, at roughly 47 degrees N.

When I heard the words Horta — the historic waterfront town on the island of Faial, in the beautiful Azores — and Brittany, the renowned French region where Crouesty is situated, my ears pricked up. Suddenly, my brain was awash with the possibilities. An ocean crossing. Solid weeks at sea. Big wind. Waves. Nothing but the horizon as far as the eye could see. A landfall in the Azores. Painting our boat's name on the sea wall in Horta.

Did I still have it in me? Was I strong enough? I never got seasick when we lived aboard in New England and the Caribbean, and I did my share of blue-water deliveries with Rick, but that was then. What about now, after years at an editorial desk? Would I be useful crew? Could I write about it while underway?

"Maybe you could sign on for a leg," JP said.

"Maybe I could do the whole thing," I replied, not quite believing the words that fell from my lips.

"You should," he said. And with that, he and Rick resumed their chat. About the only thing I remember hearing JP say afterward was that he'd be back come springtime with a couple of crew to help us do the trip.

By the time *Flyer* had entered the Gulf Stream in the spring of 2014, I'd gotten to know our European crewmates a bit better. Indeed, besides loving good food, Manfred and Xabi were interesting, smart fellows who loved sailing.



In the early days of the trip, taking advantage of fine weather and Flyer's spacious cockpit, skipper Rick Martell (left, in white T-shirt) briefed the crew on weather forecasts, watch schedules, safety procedures and the many miles yet to sail.

As we set forth into the Atlantic, I asked myself some questions: Would I be useful crew? Was I strong enough? Did I still have it in me?



RICK MARTELL



Heading east toward the Azores, Flyer encountered her first cold front. With the onset of heavy weather, the skipper called for reefs in the mainsail.

ALWAYS IN TOUCH

Crossing an ocean is definitely one way to get away from it all. But I was on assignment and my goal was to share the experience with the extended CW community as well as family and friends.

To help me pull that off, both **Iridium** and **DeLorme** rose to the occasion. I utilized their devices and the Iridium satellite network in complementary fashion. To transmit blogs (about 600 bytes) and low-resolution photos (about 100 to 200 kilobytes each) in separate emails, I used the **Iridium**

Access Point Mail & Web system and the **Iridium Extreme** satellite phone, as well as Axxess Point custom software that I downloaded onto a MacBook Pro laptop computer.

The setup establishes a narrowband Internet connection best suited for sending and receiving emails and browsing mobile websites. I did very little Web browsing, except to download **NOAA weather charts**. Transmitting emails with text and photos was certainly one way to pass time at sea; even when it worked flawlessly,

progress was slow. When I lost a satellite signal in midtransmission, I'd have to hit "Start" again to finish sending the message, something I had to do countless times. Usage charges are billed by the minute. For the record, my onboard reporting setup was separate from Flyer's satellite phone setup. Rick was provided with an **Iridium 9555** for boat business such as communicating with **Commanders' Weather** routing service.

DeLorme's handy **inReach SE** was what saved the day. This device, when paired with a smartphone after downloading the DeLorme **Earthmate** app,

allowed me to draw upon the contacts in my phone, and using the Iridium satellite network, send and receive text messages 160 characters long with the phone keyboard. You'd be surprised how much you can get across in few words; I checked in with friends, co-workers (to make sure they'd received the blogs and photos), and CW readers at least twice daily. The inReach SE also allowed me to track Flyer's progress and share it online. The Inreach, like the Iridium Extreme, has an SOS function. A newer DeLorme device, the **inReach Explorer**, integrates navigation functions

But so far, we'd experienced only short bouts of it in winds predominantly from the northwest that barely topped 10 knots. These episodes were mingled with other interludes of even lighter airs and longer sessions of motoring ("Brrrrrrmm goes the engine," noted the ship's log). Yet we were making decent progress, and for the most part, logging 150- to 200 mile noon-to-noon runs. Rick checked in with the routers at Commanders' Weather and was advised to stay at 39 to 40 degrees N to remain in the stream as long as possible and catch more breeze on the beam. So we angled *Flyer* up another 10 to 15 degrees to a course of 75 to 80 degrees. Broad reaching under main and jib, in a flash we were making 7.5 knots. "This is what we came for!" exclaimed a jubilant Todd.

"C'est bon!" cheered Xabi.

The captain and the onboard reporter, yours truly, could only nod in agreement.

As I grew accustomed to Xabi's twice daily on-deck aikido workouts and Manfred's private jam sessions (2,000 songs on four MP3 players), I also learned more about them.

Manfred, who in the 1980s crossed the Atlantic with his family aboard a 40-foot ketch-rigged Joshua named *Mafalda*, was a professional rigger. This was his fourth trans-Atlantic. Xabi, a graduate of and instructor with Les Glénans, Europe's largest sailing school, was a window installer by trade. The money from that job went to refueling the cruising kitty for his Ecume De Mer 8-meter sloop, *Nikyo*.

For Xabi, this first transatlantic was an opportunity to broaden his skills and polish his English sailing vocabulary. He found a natural teacher in Todd, whose experience crewing and delivering various powerboats and sailboats, and skippering daysail charter boats in Newport, put him in constant contact with young sailors eager to hone their skills. So, in addition to trimming sails and scanning the horizon, once they were off watch, Todd and Xabi wedged in additional morning sailing-school classes.

Meanwhile, besides pitching in with the cooking and cleaning, standing a watch or lending a hand on deck, each day I downloaded weather charts via the Iridium XcessPoint Mail & Web system that Iridium provided me. I also shared our journey's progress online via the DeLorme InReach SE. This nifty device, when used in conjunction with my iPhone, made it possible to easily send and receive brief text mes-

sages. Now I could keep in touch with family and friends back home, and answer questions about our voyage from those who tracked our progress online at the CW website.

As *Flyer* sailed eastward in gradually building westerlies, a fresh forecast from Commanders' revealed that a low-pressure system followed by a cold front would soon be upon us. As the weather filled in, Rick ordered a second, then a third reef in the main. We doused the jib and hand-steered when conditions overpowered the autopilot. Before we knew it, Xabi, at the helm, exuberantly called out: "12.1 knots!" Little wonder, then, that by the time *Flyer* was at 39 degrees N and 52 degrees W, another "BEST YET!!!" was added to the ship's log. But the building seas and wind had really just begun.

We all looked forward to the full moon on June 13, but I hadn't bargained for the rest of this show — the trough we'd encounter at the tail end of the cold front. A carousel of mountainous waves with curling silver ridges surrounded us in the cockpit, and gusts of 40-plus knots slammed against the reefed mainsail.

On watch from 2200 to 2400 with Rick, tethered in, entombed in full foul-weather regalia, I couldn't possibly open my eyes wider, and the muscles in my body couldn't be tenser. As I scanned the vast blackness all around, checked the masthead, then the instruments, I was fully immersed in my senses and surroundings, alert and silent while the boat strained and groaned and an occasional wave baptized us.

"OK, dear?" Rick asked.

"Yup," was about all I could muster. "Fine. I'm fine."

That was a partial fib. My mind was racing as fast as *Flyer* was, well, flying forward into a darkness that momentarily broke only when the luminous moon poked through the clouds.

Suddenly, the breeze freshened. The boat heeled and swerved, shuddered and eventually righted herself, and I stood up in the cockpit to regain my balance. Then came the crash from below.

"Can I get some help?" Todd called up. "Did you hear that? The dishes are everywhere."

I clawed my way forward and carefully hung on to the companionway handholds as I made my way down. It was clear that the mess before me on the cabin sole was more than the

such as route and waypoint creation to the two-way text messaging function of the inReach SE. The devices cost \$300 to \$400 and a variety of usage plans are offered.

Whatever communication devices you choose, realize there's a learning curve. Invest the time you need to learn how to use them correctly. You won't regret it.

Finally, as *Flyer*'s crew was always looking for efficient ways to power electronic devices, the **Solar Power Pad 3000** by **Secur** proved itself a handy solution.

E.L.



Our onboard mascot was a tin figure fashioned by Xabi called "the Aluminum Man." In Horta, he painted it on the seawall.

WEB EXTRAS

There's lots more on *Flyer*'s trans-Atlantic adventure online, including reports on our visits to France and the Azores, and websites we found very useful:

cruisingworld.com/1503flyer

For more on the specs of our Swan 57, and a list of the provisions we carried on board:

cruisingworld.com/1503specs

For info on the ship's library, and contact info for the manufacturers mentioned in this sidebar:

cruisingworld.com/1503comms

broken ceramic bowls, which I'd left out to dry in the rack after cleaning up dinner.

Apples, oranges, lemons and limes from a now nearly empty fruit basket — wedged next to the head of Xabi, asleep on the saloon settee — had ricocheted like billiard balls.

While Todd somehow managed to get the mini shop vac to Hoover up most of the mess, my will to help him was largely thwarted by my body. It went one way when I wanted it to go another. Somehow I was now on my back, the fruit became the ball bearings beneath me, and I rolled across the beamy saloon, paper towels in hand. Ultimately, I managed to get on my hands and knees and wipe away some of the crud.

Xabi awoke and yawned.

"Ah, breakfast in bed!" he joked. I slowly tossed fruit back where it belonged.

For the next day or so, my body engaged in nonstop isometric exercises while I attempted the simple things in life. Pulling gear on and off, taking out contact lenses and brushing teeth, and making my way from nav station to bunk and galley were brave new challenges, not always executed with anything akin to ease.

All of this honking wind from the favorable west-northwest direction had an upside: *Flyer* was now farther from Newport (1,012 miles) than from Horta (964).

Yes, things were coming together.

Once the gale passed, the new high-pressure system and its cold, crisp air blessed us with 20- to 25-knot winds from the northwest. The dolphin shows were spectacular, and we were becoming accustomed to each other and getting our routines down.

Todd was growing a beard. Xabi, trying to quit smoking, was chewing gum and singing rugby songs. Manfred went about his days with the precision the Swiss are renowned for, finding things to fix on deck. The skipper got rest and started to crack a smile. I stopped leaving dishes out to dry.

When all five of us were awake and together, we started taking bets on our Horta ETA; the winner would claim booty at the first bar we found.

But in the meantime, we were having a good time and the ship's log again served up excellent evidence: "Best dolphins yet!" "Beautiful night, Best Yet!"

Faial, one of the nine volcanic islands in the Azores archipelago, has long been a midocean stopover for sailors. The small waterfront city of Horta, with a centuries-old seafaring tradition, makes it

a significant harbor of refuge for any boat making an ocean passage. Today, 1,500 boats arrive annually at this port of call on the third most populous island in the autonomous Portuguese region.

My obsession with one day calling in at Horta by sea was fueled by the countless stories I'd read by sailors who'd made landfall there. My goals were specific: I wanted to see the blue hydrangeas that give Faial the name The Blue Island; have a gin and tonic at the famed sailors watering hole Café Sport; and before shoving off, follow in the footsteps of other sailors and paint our boat's name on the seawall.

As we made our way closer to the central cluster of islands, I grew impatient. Pico and its imposing, cloud-rimmed 7,700-foot peak dwarfed Faial and its lush quilt-patterned farm fields. We alternated between snapping photos of hill-sides and gazing at the prodigious whale spouts that shot up all over the horizon.

In light airs and flat seas, after rounding up into the lee of the bowl-like volcanic remains called Monte da Guia and dropping sails, in the early evening of June 18 we motored in to the last spot available in the harbor, the fuel dock at Horta. After tying up, my chore was to top up the water tanks, and I was glad for an excuse to put off stepping ashore.

Taking in the sights, I could hardly believe that I'd just spent 14 days at sea. Finally I let the hose drop from my hands and, wobbly, stepped off the boat.

"Hey, can I borrow your phone and call my girlfriend?" Todd asked. How strange, I thought, to not be the girlfriend waiting for a call. For so long, it had been Rick calling me.

"Tell her we haven't seen the best yet!" cried Xabi.

There's no better guide to a new land than a local. And in that local, Nicolau

Faria, a native of Pico and a high-school geography teacher, we got much more than we'd bargained for. His friends at the Azores Promotion Board tapped Nic to spend a day with us because he's a sailor and co-founder of the islands' only bareboat charter company, Sail Azores.

Before noon the next day, I still hadn't had a chance to nab a hot marina shower before Nic came knocking on *Flyer's* hull.

The next thing I knew, I was handing a *Cruising World* 40th-anniversary cap to Jose Henrique Azevedo, fourth



Once at sea, *Flyer's* multinational crew settled into familiar routines (clockwise from top left). Skipper Rick Martell, the boat's longtime captain, was mightily pleased when the miles ticked by. Fit French sailor Xabi Lastapis practiced twice-daily on-deck aikido sessions. Swiss crewman Manfred Arnold, a professional rigger, always enjoyed a trick on the helm. One of mate Todd Menillo's galley creations inspired the trip's motto: *The Best Yet*.



BILLY BLACK

generation of the family who started Café Sport, and ordering whale soup (the soup is real; the ingredient it's named for is not). It was just the start of a whirlwind day, beginning with a private tour conducted by Jose of Peter's Scrimshaw Museum, an extensive collection of intricate artwork engraved in sperm-whale teeth, ivory and bone housed above the cafe.

After bidding Jose farewell, we zigzagged through the hills in a rental car, speeding by a mix of forest and villages with homes and buildings constructed of whitewashed basalt, and pastures of cream-and-tan cattle being milked in the fields. Hydrangeas, in hues from indigo to aquamarine, russet to sunset gold, lined every bordered field and most roadsides. Their backdrop was the sparkling Atlantic, which appeared more dramatic the higher we climbed.

Our sensory explosion shifted dramatically upon reaching our next destination, at the western end of the island, the mostly barren desertlike landscape at Ponta dos Capelinhos, the site of a volcanic eruption in the late 1950s that damaged a lighthouse, displaced residents and forged new land, only a quarter of which remains due to erosion. We walked the grounds before heading down to the shore, where I stepped into the cool Atlantic waters to shake some of the dusty sand off my feet.

Finally, we paid a visit to the Caldeira do Faial, a nature reserve 1¼ miles wide and more than 1,300 feet deep, whose southern rim — Cabeço Gordo, at more than 3,400 feet — marks the island's highest point.

We sailors grew thirsty, and Nic needed to head home. So we wound up back at a very crowded Café Sport, elbowing in among the hordes of Europeans and downing the famed gin and tonics. Too soon, the conversation inevitably drifted to our departure. As we weren't going to break the time-honored superstition and shove off on a Friday, we had another day to reprovision, pick up clean laundry and paint *Flyer's* name on the seawall.

Refreshed from our visit, we bid farewell to the Azores on Saturday, June 21, with a fresh painting by Xabi noting our visit committed to posterity on the Horta seawall. With clear minds, the *Flyer* crew set forth for deep water.

Our last contact with the Azores was the looming light off our starboard quarter at Ponte da Serreta, Terceira. We were at 38 degrees N, 27 degrees W; Crouesty, our destination, was at roughly 47 degrees N, 2 degrees W. Rick had plugged in key offshore waypoints on this 1,200-nautical-mile climb off Cabo Fisterra, Spain, and Belle Île, France. Sitting at the nav station computer, I remeasured the distance with the Navionics software. Though this leg was barely a third of the trans-Atlantic voyage, to me it felt like we were in for a long ride.

And a cold one. Although it was the summer solstice, we were experiencing a serious heat deficit. Todd looked himself over and declared: "Wool pants, a watch cap and a fleece jacket — and it's summer!"

Whining aside, by the time we'd reached the halfway point of this leg and were nearly 300 miles due west of Spain, we'd experienced some of the finest sailing of the entire voyage and healthy

24-hour runs, a couple just shy of 200 miles. The winds, in the teens, mainly blew from the north, and *Flyer*, under main and jib, trucked smoothly along. We skirted the northern boundary of the Bay of Biscay, and no longer had the ocean to ourselves. When acrobatic dolphins and spouting whales weren't entertaining us, we paid close

attention to the huge cargo ships, fishing boats and other assorted vessels. At night, I scanned the radar and brushed up on identifying other craft by the lights in their rigs, thanks to Rick's quizzes.

Whether it was the ship traffic, the chill in the air or the profusion of sea life, something had definitely shifted in the onboard mood in the waning days of our passage. Maybe our European mates sniffed home. The off-watch chatter transitioned from movie trivia to shore-side obligations. Differing



Flyer's trans-Atlantic trip was broken into two long legs, a 1,900-nautical-mile stretch from Newport, Rhode Island, to the Azores, straddling the 40th parallel, and a 1,300-nautical-mile voyage onward to France.

GEAR

For this trip, I upgraded to new Gill foul-weather gear. Over a variety of base layers I already owned, including some from Patagonia, I practically lived in

the Crosswind Salopette (1) in graphite as a midlayer, with the Gill OS22 Women's Trousers (2) in graphite and the OS22 Women's Jacket in red (3) as the outer layer in heavy weather.

I also wore sturdy

Dubarry Ultima brown sea boots (4). These grippy, waterproof leather boots are lined with Gore-Tex. Combined with the Dubarry short navy blue Tech Socks and Dubarry Footbeds, my steps were certain and my

feet were snug and bone dry.

On my wrist I wore the Atom women's watch by Reactor made from corrosion-resistant 316L stainless steel (5). I found its illuminated dial handy at night.



Gill North America (www.gillna.com) Patagonia (www.patagonia.com) Dubarry (www.dubarry.us) Reactor (www.reactorwatch.com)

opinions surfaced between crew and captain on whether or not to hail ship traffic via VHF and when it was time to tuck in another reef. One evening we were spooked when Xabi spotted some wooden boat wreckage pointing high out of the water within a couple hundred yards of our starboard bow.

All else aside, the clock was ticking on our odyssey, and that realization gave me the closest sensation to nausea I'd experienced the whole way. I just didn't want it to end.

Flyer must have known too that something was up. While her performance thus far had been stellar, it was time to tell us she'd worked hard and was getting a little tired. With about 300 miles to go, the mainsail developed a small tear near the first spreader. A winch for the reefing lines blew up. The swivel on the jib roller furling jammed. The wind died. Sails slatted and made slamming, slapping noises.

"Let's face it," Xabi said with a smirk. "This situation is not The Best Yet."

Leave it to Mother Nature ultimately to turn the tide of our mood. I was sound asleep in my bunk when Todd shook me.

"Wake up! You've got to see this. Get dressed! Hurry!"

Once topside, in the dark I could see Manfred and Todd at the bow, excitedly pointing to either side. "I hated waking you," Todd said. "But I knew you'd be upset if you didn't see this!"

He was right. A formation of a dozen or so dolphins was dive-bombing in playful romps alongside *Flyer's* hull, streaming, yipping and snorting at the bow, then bearing off in long trails of bioluminescence, before swimming back up alongside the boat. I couldn't believe the sparkling streams of silver-blue light that showered off their backs and beyond, or the spirited, playful zeal with which they soared all around. Disney's got nothing on what the ocean served up, I marveled, and I lay down on deck and watched for nearly an hour before turning back in.

On Sunday, June 29, Todd again was the one to wake me. "Land ho!" he yelled with a wide-eyed smile.

Damn it, I thought. This really is it. Following a passing cold front, *Flyer* had barreled through the night in north-northwest winds of 15-plus knots and had reached the Passage de la Teignouse early. All our concern that we'd

THE CELEBRATORY CHAMPAGNE TASTED GREAT, BUT I WAS ALREADY NUMB. WE'D CROSSED AN OCEAN, THE GRANDEST ADVENTURE OF MY LIFE. AND WE'D THRIVED.



When we'd set sail, I'd had serious misgivings about just what I'd gotten myself into. On the other side of the Atlantic, I realized the only mistake I could've made was not trying in the first place.

arrive at Crouesty off the Baie de Quiberon too late to catch the afternoon's high tide — a must, given *Flyer's* 10-foot, 7-inch draft — was for naught.

I stubbornly stuck to my rocking bunk, looked through the closed hatch and saw bright blue sky. Though it was muffled, I could hear Rick, Xabi and Manfred talking about our options. Our new friends were in home waters, sharing local knowledge about shoals and shallows.

By the time I reluctantly rose, and took in the low, beautiful topography of Belle Île and the Presqu'île de Quiberon peninsula amid sparkling water, I realized we were surrounded not just by the scenery, but also by sailboats. People were out on jaunts and daysails — the nerve! We fell in and joined them, tacking back and forth to kill time. Somehow, this wasn't

the ending I'd imagined, but I went with it, and heck, even enjoyed it, though the reality that the trip was over sank heavily in the pit of my gut.

Time to bring the horse into the barn. With sails furled, fenders and lines at the ready, the greeting sign at the entrance to Port du Crouesty was upon us. There was JP, running along the breakwater and flagging us onward. Rick flashed him a smile and coolly guided *Flyer* down the channel and into the slip.

The celebratory champagne tasted great, but I was already numb. I'd crossed an ocean, the grandest voyage of my life, with a skipper who was also my life partner. Not only did we survive, we thrived. I never got sick. Though at times I was scared, I never panicked. I made new

friends, learned new skills and saw new places. I daydreamed. I read the books I never have time to read at home. And in all those hours of staring out over the horizon, I gained fresh insight into the power of nature, a realm completely outside anything our readily frayed human cosmos of emotions can easily comprehend.

Last but not least, while I may never recall which of Todd's meals was the inspiration for the simple words that became our slogan, I do know that nothing will ever compare to this astonishing, memorable experience.

C'est le top. It was the best yet.

Elaine Lembo is CW's deputy editor and writes the monthly charter news column.


RICK MARTELL



A Blissful

A four-day crewed charter aboard a well-appointed *Jeanneau 53* in southern New England is just the thing to put a young, career-driven couple at ease.

By Annie Sherman



Our first full-time experience aboard a boat larger than a skiff in waters off the tiny state of Rhode Island, where we live, work and play, went something like this: Capt. Bo van der Zanden steered us into quiet anchorages and gave my husband, Derek Luke, a fishing rod to see if he could catch dinner; chef Tory Peters served us plate-licking meals and cleaned the dishes nonstop; we met new friends; we kayaked into Menemsha Pond on Martha's Vineyard; and we saw some incredible views only a few nautical miles from our front door. Sound uncomplicated? It should. These activities were quite possibly the most drama-free we could have experienced during our crewed charter aboard the Jeanneau 53 *Zuma*. Since Derek and I are small-business owners in Newport, Rhode Island, we run ourselves ragged as the responsible problem-solvers in our respective fields — beer and rum brewing and publishing — and are unaccustomed to indulgence.

Backyard Romp

Rhode Island's Sakonnet Point served as a scenic backdrop on day one of the charter.



When fresh sushi was served for lunch and later, bottles of cockpit, we were happy to subscribe to *Zuma's way*

Our sailing experience had been limited to pleasure cruises around Narragansett Bay and a couple of deliveries I did a lifetime ago. But when fresh sushi was served for lunch and later, bottles of my favorite pinot noir were uncorked for dinner in the airy cockpit at the start of this trip last September, we were happy to subscribe to *Zuma's* ways, as well as the crewed charter ideology.

"How can you not have a good time out here?" Tory asked with a smile, pointing to the endless horizon of Rhode Island's coastline.

I could not (and would not) argue, so I settled into a lovely, relaxing routine of, well, enjoying every moment. We'd plotted an easy course from *Zuma's* summer berth in the waterfront village of Wickford on the mainland, out of Narragansett Bay and east toward the Sakonnet River, planning to anchor at Third Beach in Middletown on Aquidneck Island, before heading to Cuttyhunk, the fourth largest of the Elizabeth Islands off the southern coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. We were

eager to follow a flexible itinerary, to let the winds take us where they would for the three-night, four-day charter.

Casting off, cocktails that we fortified with Derek's signature product, Thomas Tew Rum, were firmly in hand. As is customary, Derek had trouble sitting still — hence the fishing rod. So while he entertained himself, I closed my eyes and let the sun kiss my cheeks as Bo hooked a soft southerly out of the bay.

Derek stowed the fishing rod and asked to drive for a bit, which prompted a sailing lesson. He peppered Bo with questions about boat speed, wind direction and electronics. The gracious captain didn't seem to mind. After all, we had time on our side and the wind behind us.

"Most charter guests are done with the sailing element after the first hour. But the guests who enjoy sailing and want to get involved, well, that's better and more fun," Bo said. "This boat is ideal for people who enjoy sailing but still like to be taken care of." So it appeared that we had the best of both

worlds: a weekend in which I could relax and enjoy stress-free time aboard, with a crew who could engage my hyperactive husband. Perfect.

Zuma herself was indeed a good lesson for us newbies, and we quickly learned that she's a comfortable floating hotel with two capable attendants. Launched in 2013, she is a neophyte in the charter fleet, and is now represented by the brokerage Nicholson Yachts Worldwide, based in Newport. At 53 feet, she sleeps four guests comfortably, two in the forward master suite plus two in an aft guest suite. The bright cabin feels gigantic, with plush leather and large ports at the waterline, a galley about the size of our own kitchen and separate crew quarters. "We have to be quite intimate with people on this size yacht," Bo said, "but there's plenty of room, and more often than not, guests are topside taking in the activities. She sails nicely too, and as soon as there's a puff of wind, she just goes."

And that she did. Derek drove; 8 knots of wind in the bay picked up to 16 as we



A crewed charter offers the perfect opportunity to indulge in activities that might not fit in your normal schedule. Derek Luke (far left) tries his hand at fishing during his four-day charter aboard *Zuma* (left), a 2013 Jeanneau 53. Chef Tory Peters whipped up delicious meals (below left) while captain Bo van der Zanden gave Derek instruction on the helm (below right).



my favorite pinot noir were uncorked for dinner in the airy s and the crewed charter ideology.

rounded Beavertail Point on Conanicut Island heading east, hugging the shoreline past Sachuest Point on Aquidneck Island. “It is really lovely to sail this,” Bo said as he took the wheel, relishing the breeze. “The wind is fluky around here, so we’re following it, just cruising.”

Less than 14 nautical miles from our starting point, Third Beach, on the banks of the Sakonnet River in Middletown, came into sight. Though this voyage was intended as an escape, I was content to return to this familiar spot for the night: I was raised nearby, and the beach is not far from our Newport home, so I walk it weekly. We saved the jaunt ashore for the next morning, however. Our first evening aboard *Zuma* was for dropping anchor within view of my parents’ house on the bluff, calling them to brag about how lucky we were and popping open that bottle of wine as the sun cast a brilliant orange glow.

That was Tory’s cue. While the fishing resumed and I tried to photograph the sunset, she was down below whipping together a fine three-course meal:

macadamia nut-encrusted scallops with zucchini, oysters and Portobello mushrooms, and sautéed ginger salmon with red peppers and sugar snap peas. Apparently I had written on our pre-charter preferences questionnaire that we loved seafood and veggies, wine and rum. And homemade chocolate cake for dessert, because that came next, a la mode. Not one to sit idle, Derek set the table, and we all dined in the saloon happy as could be. After the feast, we retired to our royal cabin and let *Zuma* rock us to sleep as the stars twinkled through the hatch overhead.

The next morning, we all took the dinghy to the beach for a quick walk. It was a cold, wet ride back to *Zuma* in 15 knots before we motored out of the cove, with Cuttyhunk our destination. Luckily the sun escorted us for the rest of day. “It’s a little bit chilly, a bit choppy. A true New England sailing experience,” Bo said, laughing. “We just need some fog now.” After enjoying eggs Benny in the cockpit, Derek hoisted the jib, I winched up the main and Bo cut the motor, gingerly

guiding us along the shore at 7 knots. We soon spotted Cuttyhunk, 15 miles away, right where the wind was coming from. “Just our luck,” Bo said. “If we were going to Block Island, the wind would undoubtedly be coming from that direction too.” No matter. We were here to go sailing, and sail was what we intended to do.

As we approached the shipping channel at Buzzards Bay, Bo explained that the incoming current was against the tide and the northeast wind, making the seas confused. But *Zuma*’s sharp bow and gently rounded beam allow her to cut through waves better than other boats her size, so our chariot wouldn’t be uncomfortably bouncy, he said. Luckily, we were content to chill. With my sea legs beneath me as I nestled into the cozy cockpit, Derek remained determined to catch dinner while holding on to the rail.

“Oh, look at that lovely little beach over there,” Tory said as we closed in on Cuttyhunk a few hours later. “That looks like a nice place to be.”

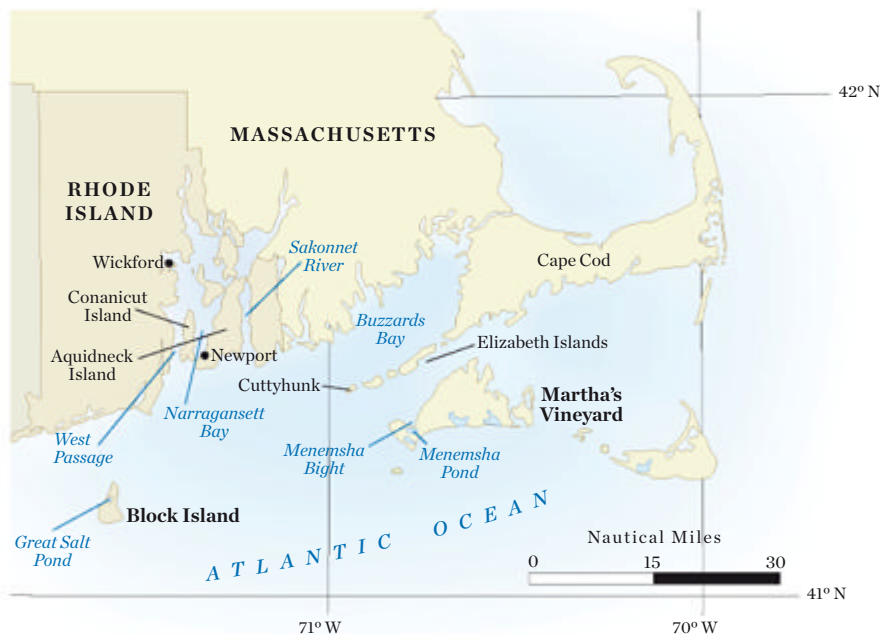
ANNIE SHERMAN





Peaceful Cuttyhunk Pond is a popular anchorage during the summer months.

Zuma's relaxed itinerary included a stop on the Sakonnet River, Cuttyhunk island and Martha's Vineyard. The view up Buzzards Bay from a high point on Cuttyhunk looks over Penikese Island (right). The author, Annie Sherman, and her husband, Derek Luke, enjoyed ever-changing views during meals in the cockpit (far right).



We dined on deck, enjoying our new view and watching the warm autumn weather. We needed **to enjoy ever**

I directed my gaze where she was pointing. "Isn't that where we're going?" I eagerly asked. Indeed it was, but we had a few more tacks to make before passing Penikese Island and rounding in to Cuttyhunk Pond with the genoa aloft. Delicious smells soon wafted up from the galley, but Tory made us wait until we anchored to devour her rosemary roasted chicken with potatoes. We dined on deck, enjoying our new view and watching the other cruisers capitalizing on southern New England's warm autumn weather. There was a calm vibe here, yet we all knew we must pack every moment in before the fall frost.

That afternoon, Bo took Derek and me in to shore to look around, and on the way, we noticed our neighbors relaxing on deck, with cups of coffee and books. Ashore, we wandered through this sleepy island of less than a square mile, with shingle-sided houses, where 52 year-round residents drive golf carts and shutter their seasonal businesses after Labor Day. Heading up to Joe's

Bunker, a former U.S. Navy lookout, we enjoyed panoramic views from the island's highest point. The fog rolled in quickly, just as Bo had requested. As we headed back to *Zuma*, he said rain was coming, so it might be a wet night.

Back aboard, I hopped into our cabin's stall shower. It was pouring rain by the time I was clean and eagerly awaiting another great meal. What is it about sailing and all this fresh air that made me so ravenous? I never got my answer. But I did get an heirloom cherry- and sangria-tomato salad with basil, cheese and olive oil, with scallop and shrimp pappardelle pasta, and for dessert, cheesecake. "Pretty much everything I make is an experiment. I just go to the farmers markets and throw a fresh meal together," Tory said. "That's one

of the best parts of being in Wickford for the summer — access to fresh local seafood, veggies and meats."

The next morning brought bright blue skies and a howling 20-knot wind. While Derek woke early for a knot-tying lesson, the banana pancakes and freshly squeezed juice were my alarm clock. After another jaunt ashore so Derek could kiteboard, we motored toward Martha's Vineyard and dropped anchor at Menemsha Bight, off the entrance to Menemsha Pond. The wind had died and the sun was heating up by midday, so after fish tacos and lure tying, we took *Zuma's* inflatable two-person kayak for a spin into Menemsha Pond. We were able to float most of the way back, letting the ripping current carry us out past sunbathers and fishermen on the beach

RESOURCES

For details about chartering *Zuma*, contact **Nicholson Yachts Worldwide** (www.nicholsonyachts.com).

Other brokers who book bareboat and crewed char-

ters include:

Ed Hamilton & Co. (www.ed-hamilton.com)
Virgin Island Sailing, Ltd. (www.visailing.com)
Ocean Charters (www.oceancharters.com)

oceancharters.com)

For more about chartering and companies, consult the charter section of the *Cruising World* website (www.cruisingworld.com).



other cruisers capitalizing on southern New England's y moment before the fall frost.

and tourists licking ice cream.

I thought it was a mirage when I spotted a lovely spread of creamy Camembert and chevre cheeses awaiting us in the cockpit. Good cheese is another favorite that I had noted on our preference sheet, and which Tory had heeded, and it was just the thing to put me into a trance while lounging in the sun. Grilled New York sirloin and corn on the cob were on the menu, with red wine and a special panna cotta for our last night aboard, which was also a celebration of Derek's upcoming 39th birthday. We dined again in the cockpit, telling stories and watching the stars, reminded while looking for a blanket how chilly it can be at night here, despite the day's heat.

After all the paddling, hiking and fresh air, not surprisingly I slept like a baby as the light waves tapped *Zuma's* hull. But Derek was up at dawn to cast his fishing line again — and this time he had company. Men in kayaks floated around the pond's entrance, and the breachway was littered with fishermen. I don't think

Derek had as much luck as they did, but he did catch a small red gurnard fish, which wasn't edible, so he threw it back.

For the hungry fisherman and the rest of the crew, bacon and eggs were served for breakfast, with fresh juice from Tory's fruit press, as morning bloomed into full sun. For the sail home, Bo prepared the Code Zero. "It unfurls like a kite and you have to pull as fast as you can," he said, adding, "We don't need the mainsail, as it'll block all the wind. Now we're going as fast as we were with the motor."

The slight current and outgoing tide carried us out past the Elizabeth Islands again, and as the mainland hove into view 10 miles away, the 5- to 10-knot breeze proved a little too variable for the code zero. Half a mile from the Buzzards Bay buoy, we stopped going forward. "This is not the angry sea we sailed through on the way over," Derek noted. So on went the motor, and it stayed on for most of our return to Wickford.

After lunch, we spotted the Newport bridge span on the horizon, and though

we knew home was so close, we didn't pull into *Zuma's* dock until dusk, after cruising up Narragansett Bay's East Passage. "It's almost like coming back home here now, like pulling into your driveway. It's all familiar," said Tory. "Newport and Wickford are two of the top friendliest ports we've ever been to. The locals gave us the jackets off their backs, their cars for running errands, and really welcomed us."

We didn't want to leave, so we did the next best thing by inviting our new friends to Derek's birthday dinner at our home, vowing to visit them in their winter port in the Caribbean. We couldn't shake the permanent smiles and relaxation that had overcome us in just four short days by letting someone else take care of us. After a charter like that, it's no wonder.

Annie Sherman is a writer, editor and the author of Legendary Locals of Newport. Her husband, Derek Luke, is a co-founder of Coastal Extreme Brewing Co. in Newport, Rhode Island.

COURTESY OF ANNIE SHERMAN

Spot the Pox

Projects: Wherever dissimilar metals meet on your sailboat, look closely for signs of corrosion and take preventive measures to keep it from spreading. **By Tom Zydler**

Put two incompatible metals side by side in a marine environment — just salty air is enough — and ugly things will happen. A bronze bolt will eat through an aluminum base in short order. And stainless-steel fasteners, commonly used on aluminum, will become increasingly hard to remove as the aluminum oxidizes around them. On your sailboat, preventing corrosion is essential.

Among the more common places of concern are aluminum spars. Stainless-steel fastener threads must be coated in that magic stuff called Tef-Gel; it's worth every

WHEREVER YOU SPOT A COMBINATION OF DIFFERENT METALS, TAKE A LOOK AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER BY INERT MATERIAL.

penny when it comes time to take things apart. Tef-Gel coating provides a barrier between the more corrosion-resistant stainless steel and the easily corroding aluminum. All those stainless fittings must be isolated from an aluminum mast or boom to avoid the formation

of corrosion pitting. A plastic gasket will work well too, and you can easily cut one from an empty drinking-water jug.

A coating process called anodizing is the best way to keep aluminum from corroding, and will offer some protection when the metal comes into contact with stainless-steel fittings.

Some mast makers provide anodized mast sections, although in the U.S. painting is also a very common way of treating masts. To be effective such a paint job requires skilled, conscientious painters and dedicated facilities protected from weather.

Wherever you spot a combination of different metals, take a look and make sure they are separated from each other by inert material.

Remove fasteners and coat the threads with Tef-Gel. Act promptly before deep pits develop in the aluminum base under fittings. Early detection and treatment will save you a lot of hassles down the line.

Here are three problem areas I've discovered onboard and the steps I've taken to correct them.



A PESKY PEDESTAL

1. Neither painting nor anodizing will protect aluminum forever. I bought a new aluminum steering pedestal from a manufacturer that offers only a painted finish. During the third season on the boat, the paint began blistering around the fasteners that hold the pedestal down. **2.** I wasn't ready to remove the pedestal and have it sandblasted, primed and repainted, which would have been a labor-intensive job. In order to delay this until our next downtime in a boatyard, I scraped the blistered areas to bare aluminum. Before sanding the aluminum, I taped the margins of the patches to make the job a little



BRONZE, AGED

1. Bronze items will destroy any aluminum they touch. On our Lewmar 55 winches, plastic separators were put between the bronze winch body and the aluminum base. Unfortunately, whoever installed the winches used thick layers of bedding compound that blocked the little water-drain ports in the winch bases. Over time, seawater sat inside the winches, bathing the bronze, aluminum and stainless in a galvanic soup. **2.** The plastic separators deteriorated and the corrosion buildup eventually cracked a piece off one of the aluminum bases. **3.** Separating the winches from their bases was hard since the corrosion between the stainless machine screws and



TURNING-BLOCK BLUES

1. Anodizing as a protective measure has a limited life span. Our Mason 44 sailboat came with heavily anodized turning blocks for the headsail sheets, bolted onto stainless-steel bases and then to the deck. One of the aluminum pieces was cracked next to a stainless mounting bolt. Removing the turning-block assemblies

Tom Zydler is a frequent CW contributor. He and his wife, Nancy, spent last summer exploring Labrador aboard their Mason 44, Frances B, which they've extensively refitted.



neater. **3.** Next I brushed Pettit 6455, a two-part metal primer that has always given me good results, onto the bare sanded aluminum. One coat of two-part epoxy primer (Pettit Protect 4100/4101) followed. Here's a tip: Apply your final coat of paint as soon as the epoxy cures and you won't have to sand. **4.** A coat of one-part gloss white paint finished the repair. It wasn't a perfect match of whites but the whole operation prevented the corrosion from progressing to the stage of pitting. Once the aluminum develops pits, it's very difficult to stop the corrosion from continuing, even when the area is re-covered by paint.



the aluminum base had seized the fasteners solid. Applying heat let me remove just two machine screws out of a total of six. For the rest I took the winches to a machine shop. A fabricator welded nuts to the tops of the seized machine screws, and a combination of the very high welding heat and an air-powered wrench finally got them loose. **4.** When reassembling the winches, I installed new plastic separators, smeared Tef-Gel on the threads of the stainless bolts and put neoprene washers under the fastener heads. I was also careful to put sealant tape only around the bolts that held the winches down on the cockpit coamings. All the draining ports were thus clear and open. Now routine maintenance is easy.



revealed an ugly coat of oxidation that had built up around the stainless fasteners. **2.** After cleaning, I remounted the turning blocks on plastic spacers just thick enough to lift the aluminum off the stainless bases. **3.** Before inserting the stainless bolts I also put neoprene washers under the bolt heads to keep them from touching the aluminum.

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To keep the fuel line stiff, we “requisitioned” some bamboo skewers from the galley.



Once the fuel line's prepared, mate Todd Menillo is ready for action.



While the skipper steadies the jerry jug, the mate primes the fuel line.



With the deck fill cap removed and everything in place, the operation continues.



After the diesel's flowing, it's just a matter of watching and waiting: No aching back!



To drain the jerry can of the last of the fuel, it's back to the good old funnel.

Transferring Fuel? Try This!

Here's one delivery skipper's way to efficiently move fuel from on-deck jerry jugs to the tanks below.

By Rick Martell

After many years of delivering yachts with small fuel capacity — and having tried all kinds of ways to transfer fuel from bladders, cans and drums — I was determined to find a clean and efficient way to do this. I was tired of getting mouthfuls of fuel and spillage on teak decks.

I had my chance yet again when I was hired to deliver *Flyer*, a Swan 57, from Newport, Rhode Island, to France (see “The Best Yet,” page 36.) I'd been the captain of *Flyer* for the previous eight years and I had a good grasp of her fuel use, as I'd delivered her to and from the Caribbean numerous times. She has two fuel tanks: 78-gallon and 80-gallon, for a total of 158 gallons. If we were to get caught in a high-pressure system for a period of time during this delivery, we couldn't make it to our scheduled layover in the Azores, so our solution was to place 10 five-gallon fuel jugs on deck. Now, how to transfer

that fuel without the mess?

Someone had suggested a priming hose that's normally used on an outboard tank. So I tried that by testing it on the boat before leaving. We used a universal hose (with no end fitting) that has a priming bulb. When we first inserted the hose into the fuel jug on deck, it rose to the top. It needed something to keep it rigid. We had some bamboo skewers aboard so we taped them to the hose. Problem solved. Anything that will make the hose stiff will work. Once we got that sorted out, we dropped that part of the hose into the can and proceeded to pump the bulb on the hose. Sure enough, a prime started and fuel ran into the tank without any spillage.

We did find that it was a slow process because of the diameter of the hose, which was three-eighths inch. When the can was about two-thirds empty and easier to handle, we took out the prime hose, placed it in a clean plastic garbage bag for safekeeping, and poured the remainder of the fuel into the tank, again without a mess.

MATERIALS

- Marpac Premier fuel-line assembly (3/8")
- Disposable gloves
- Scissors, tape
- Skewers or rulers; any stiff, sticklike material
- Funnel
- Garbage bags
- Rags

R.M.

Rick Martell is a delivery skipper with more than 100,000 miles in his wake, and the owner of the 1935 Crocker ketch Land's End.

RICK MARTELL

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Exhausting the Possibilities

Make sure your exhaust system meets its manufacturer's stringent installation requirements — or keep your fingers crossed. *By Steve D'Antonio*

The design of marine exhaust systems seems to be an afterthought for the many boatbuilders, boatyards, yacht designers and installers who fail to consult engine manufacturer guidelines. Boat owners with exhaust issues often hear one of two diagnoses: "It's not compliant but it works fine" (lucky) or "Water has backed up into the engine and it's ruined" (unfortunate). Neither is desirable; both are avoidable.

Proper systems safely remove and cool hot exhaust gases while preventing water from entering the engine or the boat. Of course, the design should be reliable and long lasting. Straightforward, right? Yet in practice, it has proved to be a vexing challenge to countless engine installers.

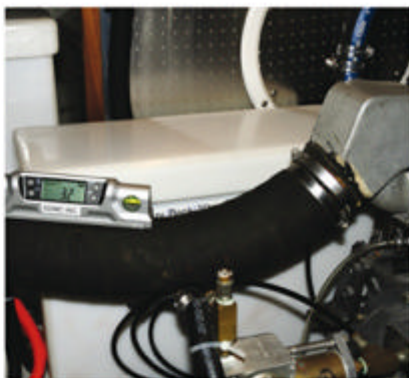
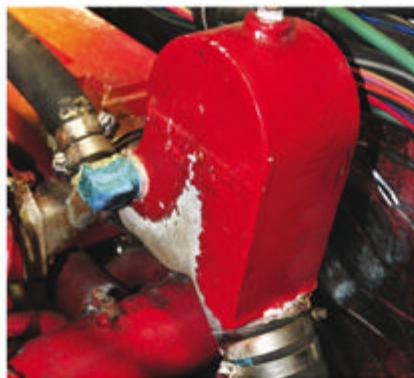
inders are a bad marriage, which is why few engines survive such an experience.

The angle or slope of the hose is also important. If it's too shallow it may not present enough of an impediment to water entry, and under no circumstances should water be allowed to pool in exhaust-hose "dips" between the exhaust elbow and transom discharge. The only intentional reservoir should be a water-lift muffler. The downward angle of the hose after the water-lift muffler should be a minimum of 1/2 inch per foot, or about 2.5 degrees. The angle of the hose immediately after the mixing elbow varies from manufacturer to manufacturer; ideally it should be no less than 15 degrees.

exhaust system is compliant.

What's especially troubling about systems that fail to meet their manufacturer's requirements is the amount of time that often passes before they fail. On several occasions, I've encountered vessels with exhaust designs that were incorrect from the day they left the factory, yet their failures occurred years later. Why it took so long always remained a mystery to me. It may simply be a change in owner and usage. Or the right (or wrong) set of circumstances initially failed to materialize.

For instance, consider a scenario in which you shut down the engine while running down a wave face in the instant a following sea strikes the discharge. It



Marine exhaust systems are sometimes installed haphazardly, which can lead to huge problems when they're least expected or needed. Exhaust risers are available in a variety of off-the-shelf configurations, one of which is shown here (left). If one of these units can't be sourced and doesn't provide the necessary lift, the solution is to have a custom riser fabricated. A common violation of manufacturers' installation guidelines is a mixing elbow that runs "uphill," as in this example (middle). The problem is that such an installation will substantially increase the likelihood of water sluicing back into the engine, an occurrence that could definitely wreck your day — and your auxiliary. You can tell almost immediately when an installation meets the required guidelines and specifications (right). In this case, the "drop" to the water-lift muffler is more than adequate, as is the angle.

Peruse several engine installation manuals and you'll find very similar requirements. Strong emphasis is always placed on the "drop": the distance between the point where water is injected into the exhaust — at the mixing elbow — and the water collector or water-lift muffler. If the drop is insufficient (a minimum of 6 inches is commonly called for, and 12 inches is better), in heavy rolling or pitching conditions water could sluice up the hose, through the exhaust manifold, and into the cylinders through open exhaust valves. Seawater and highly polished iron cyl-

The height of the engine's injection elbow above or below the waterline is also critical. It too is almost always clearly defined in installation guidelines, as is the height of the hose's rise before it exits the transom. In most cases the latter's apex must be at least 12 inches above the waterline. The same holds true for anti-siphon loops, at all heeling angles.

The defects noted above are commonly encountered but this list is by no means, well, exhaustive. Review the installation manuals for your engine and generator to determine whether your

could take hundreds of hours of operating time before all three things occur simultaneously. Remember, installation standards are written with clear intent, to ensure reliability. So I'm always dismissive when I hear this frequent excuse: "I don't care what the book says, it's been OK all these years so why change it now?" Sure, your luck may hold. Then again, it may not.

Steve D'Antonio offers services for boat owners and buyers through Steve D'Antonio Marine Consulting (www.stevedmarineconsulting.com).

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Power Plays

Electronics: Three builders take different approaches to lithium-ion battery installation, but in the end they have a lot in common. *By Ed Sherman*

Talk batteries with a sailor and the topic inevitably turns to the promise of — or problems with — lithium-ion technology. To some, it's truly the future. Others are terrified by reports of electrical fires causing extensive damage on boats. And then there's the price. These battery systems are very expensive, which in itself will put a lot of folks off. For me, the important questions are these: Are the batteries safe? And is there an acceptable return on what can be a significant investment in both system design and equipment?

Companies such as Torqeedo, Mastervolt, Valence, Genasun and Victron Energy have refined lithium technology over the last decade. Thanks to their work, we now have some solid information on which to frame the argument for lithium batteries, and a growing library of information about how to manage them safely.

As one of the judges at this year's *Cruising World* Boat of the Year contest, I had the good fortune to closely inspect three different sailboats using lithium batteries, and even better, all three builders took a different approach to the design of these very high-tech

systems. That said, there are some pronounced commonalities among them that help answer the bottom-line question of ROI, and when all is considered, yes, these batteries may be worth it — for the right type of owner.

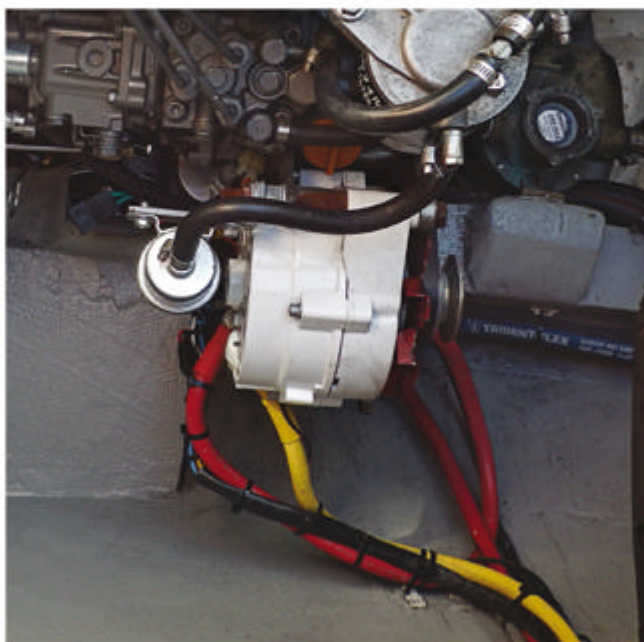
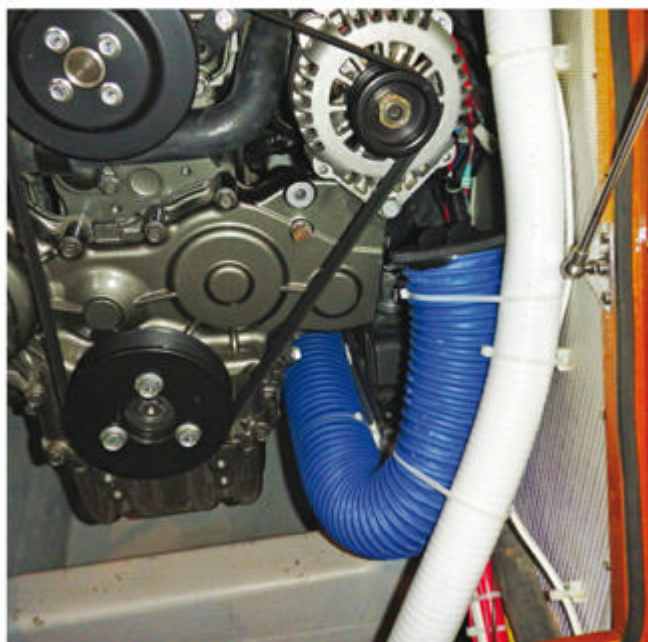
So why would a cruising sailor want lithium batteries? Well, compared to conventional gel and flooded-cell batteries, they can absorb a hefty charge quickly, which minimizes engine run time. These batteries also promise much higher electrical current density, which means more amp hours of electrical current for a given size and weight battery bank. Space is at a premium on most sailboats, and saving weight translates into better performance. And lastly, lithium batteries can be deeply discharged compared to traditional flooded-cell lead-acid batteries, providing more amperage per cycle, and the expected cycle life of these batteries is higher.

All this means lots of power storage capacity that can be recharged quickly and economically, many times over. But — and here's the big caveat — some serious engineering and equipment are required to get the most out of these batteries and, more importantly, to

make sure they're installed and used in a safe manner.

The Chemical Equation

Lithium is a highly reactive element that's nearly always found in compound form with other metals. Early on, this caused problems for researchers, since the lithium would react differently depending on the elements with which it was paired to form an electrolyte. The different electrolytes available, such as lithium cobalt, lithium nickel manganese, lithium manganese or lithium iron phosphate, achieve different levels of current density when used in a battery. The goal for manufacturers was to maximize storage capacity. But other factors come into play in real-life applications, particularly regarding how the various compounds contribute to the possibility of thermal runaway — the Achilles heel of lithium technology. Thermal runaway is a repeating cycle in which excessive heat causes more heat until either the process is brought under control (cooled) or an explosion occurs. No doubt you've heard horror tales of onboard electrical fires sparked by these systems.



COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURERS

Experience has taught us that lithium iron phosphate is the safest combination, and all three of the boats in this year's BOTY used batteries with this chemistry. Although its current density is somewhat less than with other electrolytes, the trade-off is enhanced safety.

Voltage Matters

Two of the three owners are electrical engineers. For them, working with lithium technology is the ultimate science project. Each took a different tack fitting out their live-aboard boats, a Balance 451 catamaran and Morris 48 GT monohull. The third boat was an all-out performance cruiser, a Gunboat 55 catamaran, whose design brief dictates cutting-edge everything, with an emphasis on saving weight without compromising strength or performance.

The Gunboat and Balance owners went with 24-volt electrical systems wherever possible, converting the voltage to 12 volts for specific needs. The advantage of using a 24-volt system is that the size of the wire connecting components can be about half the size of that needed to carry 12 volts. This saves weight and money. The owner and designer of the Balance electrical system estimates he achieved weight savings of 100 to 200 pounds.

In real-life applications, we've learned that lithium-ion batteries need to be part of a comprehensive battery management system. The metrics that these

systems measure and control vary slightly from one vendor to another, but overall, careful monitoring and precise control are the keys to both safety and the ROI previously mentioned.

All three of the boats I looked at use state-of-the-art management systems from either Mastervolt, Victron Energy or Elite Power Solutions. From a safety perspective, we've learned that you must carefully regulate battery cell low voltage as well as high voltage. Operating outside of strict parameters is now known to be one of the primary causes of induced thermal runaway. The Victron battery management system found on the Morris, for example, sets high voltage at 16.8 volts and low at 10.0 volts. The management system on the Balance not only controls low and high voltage but also high current, and monitors high temperature at the individual cell level inside the battery.

Charging Up

Recharging systems are where I saw the greatest differences in the three boats. The Morris uses a Panda AGT5000 DC generator rated at 272 amps continuous. The boat's electrical system is DC based, with a pair of 3,000-watt inverters converting DC to AC for running things like the microwave, air conditioning and water heater while underway. Dockside, the boat uses three Victron 100-amp battery chargers to keep the batteries charged. This boat is set up with three 200-amp-hour Victron batteries for house loads and one 60-amp-hour engine starter battery. Underway, charging is accomplished via a 160-amp alternator regulated by a Balmar programmable voltage regulator.

On the Morris, because the batteries can accept a charge at a high rate, the alternator works extremely hard and can create enough heat to ruin electrical equipment. To overcome this, Morris designed a forced ventilation system to help cool the alternator, and installed a temperature sensor on the alternator that is linked to the voltage regulator,

A ventilation hose feeds fresh, cool air to the high-output alternator on the Morris 48 GT (far left). A Balmar 140-amp alternator is one of two on the Gunboat that are monitored to ensure temperatures don't climb too high (center). The owner of the Balance 451 built his own batteries, and monitors individual cells to get the most out of his self-designed system (left).



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maintaining alternator temperature at no more than 190 degrees F. This is a relatively cool temperature and ensures the alternator won't fail prematurely. Morris also had to provide additional cooling for the AC battery chargers, as they get extremely hot as well.

Underway, a voltage sensor aboard the Morris automatically starts the Panda generator when the batteries drop to 40 percent of their capacity, or about 11.9 volts. The generator will shut down automatically when battery voltage levels are at 13.2 volts, or 98 percent of capacity. This charging regimen is designed to maximize the lifespan of the lithium batteries. They lose cycle life if kept at 100 percent charge for extended periods of time, and in this case, Morris is being conservative by switching on the generator at 60 percent discharge; the batteries could probably go as low as 20 percent charge without affecting total lifecycles.

The Gunboat 55 uses Mastervolt batteries and shore power chargers that are integrated with a C-Zone digital switching and touch screen-controlled system, which in turn is integrated with the B&G multifunction display at the helm. The Gunboat has twin diesels and uses dual Balmar 140-amp alternators, which like the Morris' are equipped with temperature sensors integrated with a programmable voltage regulator to keep operating temperatures within bounds.

The boat carries four 160-amp-hour Mastervolt lithium batteries with an integrated management system. It also has two 4,000-watt inverter/chargers, each equipped with 120-amp charger output. The Gunboat

LITHIUM ION: NOT FOR THE DO-IT-YOURSELFER

Unless you have extensive experience with complex electrical systems, I don't recommend attempting to assemble a lithium-ion battery bank and monitoring system on your own. A lot of variables must be measured and controlled to prevent the very real threat of thermal runaway and possibly a catastrophic fire.

Charging systems work hard when coupled with lithium-ion batteries. Cooling systems must be adequate, and temperature-regulated alternators and battery chargers are a must. Battery management systems need to carefully monitor charge and temperature in the batteries themselves. High-current batteries require proper fusing at their output. All three of the boats I looked at use high-current class T fuses to protect the output circuits from the batteries.

The batteries must be installed in a clean, always dry place. Any moisture can damage the management system or the circuitry that connects the battery cells.

Finally, a word about fires and firefighting, should a fire ignite. You cannot extinguish a lithium-ion battery fire with any conventional fire-extinguishing system. Once lithium-ion batteries become overheated and thermal runaway commences, it likely will be impossible to cool them until the boat sinks and submerges them in water.

Aboard a sailboat, the only option when it comes to safety, then, is to design and properly install the battery bank so that the possibility of a fire is eliminated. That means complying with all manufacturer recommendations and closely monitoring and maintaining all the components over time. Lithium-ion batteries offer lots of benefits, but the complexity of the systems involved must be clearly understood. — E.S.

has a pair of 16,000 BTU air-conditioning units. When they're running, or the inverters and water heaters are contributing to heavy AC loads, the boat must either be plugged in to shore power or running its generator.

To help power production, the Gunboat sports 800 watts' worth of Solara panels mounted on the cabin top. These in turn feed back to the system through MPPT (or maximum power point tracking) controllers, which maximize charging. The system's designer says later Gunboat 55s are equipped with 1,600 watts of solar power.

The Balance 451 takes yet another approach. Unlike the Morris or the Gunboat, which use off-the-shelf batteries, the owner handpicked the cells for his batteries from a Chinese manufacturer and assembled two banks of batteries delivering a nominal 24 volts, with a 200-amp-hour capacity each, all managed by a system from Elite Power Solutions. The decision to go with custom-made batteries allows him to replace cells as needed. Accordingly, his battery monitoring system checks each cell separately and gives a report on each as needed. He keeps three spare cells on hand just in case.

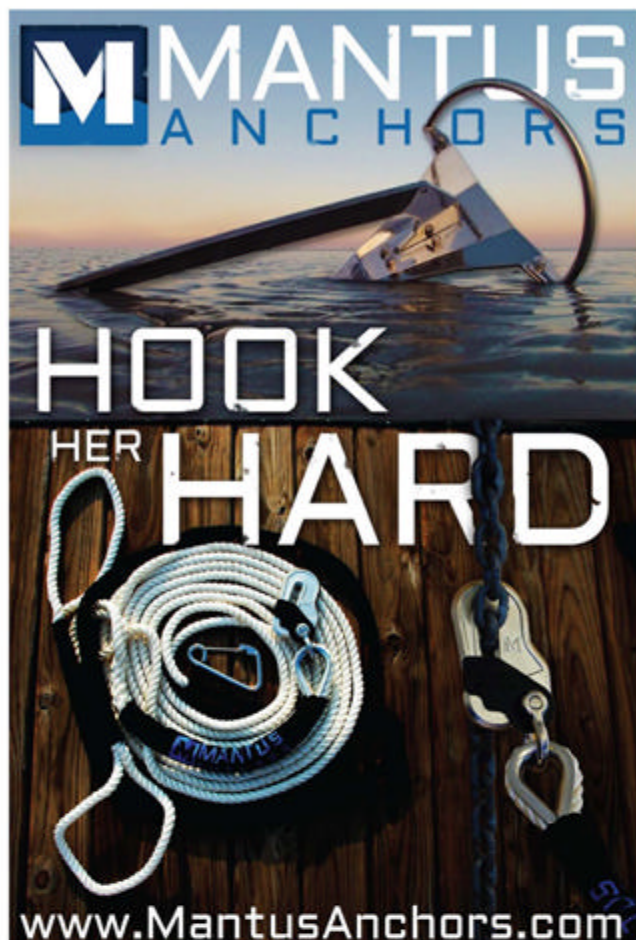
To recharge, the Balance uses 800 watts' worth of solar power, and the owner plans to add 600 watts of wind power. The boat is also equipped with two Victron 2,500-watt inverter/chargers, each with 70-amp charger outputs for dockside use. Underway, the boat is equipped with two 160-amp alternators fed through Genasun voltage regulators, with customized lithium charge profiles programmed in.

The owner of the Balance reports he can run two 9,000 BTU AC units and a microwave simultaneously with this equipment. That said, he has incorporated automatic load-shedding capability into the system that will turn off loads in a prioritized sequence if needed.

The owner further tweaked his system by customizing the battery charge curve profiles for the 70-amp Victron battery chargers. He says it takes just two hours to fully recharge the batteries after running for 24 hours in straight discharge mode (DC load only). Unlike the Morris or the Gunboat, this gets accomplished either by plugging the boat in or, perhaps uniquely, by running one of his propulsion engines and letting the 160-amp alternator handle it all.

Finally regarding the Balance, I asked the owner what would satisfy him in terms of ROI for his lithium system, as opposed to a more conventional power supply. His answer is telling: The batteries are projected to have a working life in the 3,000- to 5,000-cycle range, though he'd be happy with 1,000. Compare that to typical AGM or flooded lead-acid batteries that operate in the 300- to 800-cycle range, and you can begin to see why cruising sailors might want to embrace this technology. Which approach to take? Well, I think we're just going to have to see whose batteries hold up the best. I plan to keep track of the three boats and see how their power systems are performing a year from now.

Ed Sherman, a frequent CW contributor and 2015 Boat of the Year judge, is vice president and education director at the American Boat and Yacht Council.



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New and Improved

Marlow Hunter takes a different tack in building the MH 37. *By Mark Pillsbury*

At first glance, the newest sailboat from Florida's Marlow Hunter looks to be a slightly smaller adaptation of the MH 40 that was introduced shortly after luxury powerboat builder David Marlow bought the company in 2012. Like its bigger sibling, the 37's wide beam is carried all the way aft from amidships; hard chines provide considerable volume below; a large swim platform folds down from the stern; and long, sleek-looking ports span either side of the cabin house to create a distinctive look and let lots of light into the interior.

But in reality, quite a bit is different about the MH 37, starting with the way the sailboat is built. Greg Emerson, Marlow Hunter's sales director, says the balsa coring that Hunter has traditionally used in its hulls and decks has been replaced with Nida-Core honeycomb (the hull is solid glass below the waterline). Should water somehow find a way into the laminate, the coring won't be degraded. With the 37, Marlow Hunter opted for a better grade of gelcoat than it previously used and vinylester resin for the layup. In addition, more Kevlar has been added to the laminate to increase

hull strength forward. The company has long used the tough-as-nails cloth to strengthen the bow in case of collision, but in laying up the 37, Kevlar is carried back through the keel and up the sides to help support loads from the chainplates.

Emerson said the changes in construction are a result of Marlow's involvement in the design process, which also includes in-house engineers and longtime Hunter designer Glenn Henderson.

I got to sail the MH 37 on a sunny November afternoon on Long Island Sound. The breeze was light, less than 10 knots, and our close-hauled speed hovered just under 5 knots. In about 8 knots of wind, the boat tacked through 90 degrees, not bad considering the in-mast furling main (a conventional main is available) and shoal-draft keel (a deep keel is also available; standard foils are cast iron, lead is an option). The 110 percent jib, set on a roller furler, is easily handled, with sheets led to winches mounted outboard on the coamings just forward of the helm. I found I had to stretch to reach them while still holding the wheel, but tacking singlehandedly

was still quite doable, and the cockpit's beam is an inevitable trade-off for the generously sized aft cabin below.

I'm a fan of Hunter's trademark arch over the cockpit because it places one end of the double-ended mainsheet — led from the traveler overhead to a line stopper that's mounted by the helm — where the skipper can grab it quickly if needed. The sheet's other end is led aft from the mast to a winch on the cabin top where the crew can help trim too.

The B&R fractional rig eliminates the need for a backstay, so the cockpit is uncluttered as you step aboard from the swim platform. The boat we sailed had a folding wheel, which added to the ease of moving about. I found the cockpit seats to be quite comfortable and long enough to stretch out on. A fold-down cockpit table, mounted on the steering pedestal, will prove handy for entertaining.

Owners who favor marinas will appreciate dual 30-amp power cords that are permanently affixed and hang in a locker on the stern. The fuel fill is also located there, which means you need to lower the swim platform to diesel up. For those who prefer to anchor out,



Clear, wide side decks make it easy to move about the MH 37 (opposite). An athwartship double in the owner's aft cabin provides headroom for sitting up and reading (left). A solid wood sole adds warmth to the interior's traditional layout.

Marlow Hunter has you covered too, with twin offset bow rollers, a large anchor locker and a windlass. I liked the heavy cleat placed in the locker for making off a snubber. Elsewhere on deck, fold-down cleats are used to eliminate toe-stubbers.

The boat we sailed had the optional 40-horsepower Yanmar diesel (a 29-horsepower Yanmar comes standard). Underway, we had plenty of get-up-and-go while motoring out the channel. When I shifted into reverse at speed, we stopped on a dime. At cruising rpm, the boat easily turned a full circle in about a boat length and a half.

Stepping below, you realize just how big this 37-footer is. Aft, in what the builder has deemed the owner's cabin, a queen-size berth lies athwartships, an arrangement that allows sitting headroom at its head. The cabin includes two hanging lockers and a door to the head and shower, located to port of the companionway steps and also accessible from the saloon. Ports in the hull and cockpit sides let in a good deal of light, but pleasant as this place is, at 6 feet tall I think I'd make the forward cabin and V-berth my stateroom. There's plenty of room there to move about and lots of storage in the two hanging lockers and under the berth.

As I started down the companionway, the first details that struck me were the two heavy stainless handrails to either side of the companionway hatch. A second set of rails flank the stairs, ensuring a secure trip up or down in boisterous seas.

Starboard of the steps, there's a well-laid-out, well-equipped galley. The Corian countertop hints at luxury, while a dedicated dish-drying cabinet indicates utility. Throughout the interior, the rich American cherry woodwork is easy on the eyes, and blends well with light-colored panels on the forward bulkhead and overhead. The long windows in the cabin sides, ports in the hull and five flush-mounted overhead hatches provide plenty of light during the day; at night LED interior and exterior lights brighten things up. Options on the 37 I sailed included AC and a Raymarine instrument package, among other features.

Forward of the nav desk, which sits opposite the galley, a long settee spans the port side of the saloon. A U-shaped seat and dining table are to starboard; the table can be lowered to provide two additional berths, if desired. For ventilation, the MH 37 even sports a pair of dorade vents in the saloon, somewhat of a rarity in contemporary production boats.

Heading back toward the slip at Mystic Shipyard, we set the sails wing-and-wing for a spell. Though more breeze would have made for a spirited ride, the MH 37 moved along quite well and answered the helm instantly as we rounded up to a reach for our run home down the channel. Spying the many nooks and crannies along the shore, I couldn't help but think that this latest offering from a longtime American boatbuilder would be a fine craft for cruising this coast — or any other that you'd care to visit.

Mark Pillsbury is CW's editor.

MARLOW HUNTER 37

LOA	39' 9"	(12.12 m.)
LWL	35' 8"	(10.87 m.)
Beam	13' 1"	(3.99 m.)
Draft (shoal/deep)	5' 0"/6' 6"	(1.52/1.98 m.)
Sail area	841 sq. ft.	(78.1 sq. m.)
Ballast (shoal)	5,727 lb.	(2,598 kg.)
Displacement	18,995 lb.	(8,616 kg.)
Ballast/D	.30	
D/L	187	
SA/D	18.9	
Water	80 gal.	(303 l.)
Fuel	50 gal.	(189 l.)
Holding	25 gal.	(95 l.)
Mast height	61' 2"	(18.64 m.)
Engine	40 hp Yanmar (upgrade)	
Designer	Glenn Henderson, Marlow Hunter Design Team	
Price	\$220,000	

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SEA TRIAL

Wind speed	6 to 8 knots	
Sea state	Calm to 1 foot	
Sailing		
Closehauled	4.7 knots	
Reaching	3.6 knots	
Motoring		
Cruise (2,400 rpm)	6.7 knots	
Fast (3,000 rpm)	7.8 knots	

Long Tall Sally

Broad of beam and high of freeboard, the powerful Hanse 575 was built for sallying forth on the high seas. *By Herb McCormick*



These days, the big production boatbuilders are all building some darn big production boats. Last month, in Miami, Beneteau unveiled its Oceanis 60, which joins the ranks of recent launches from, among others, Jeanneau (Sun Odyssey 57 and 64) and Dufour (560 Grand' Large) in the Plus 55-foot Club. The Hanse 575, from Germany's prodigious Hanse Group (it also produces Moodys and Dehlers, and several other brands), is another new member. While she may not be the biggest of the bunch, she is nevertheless one very impressive yacht.

The first things you notice when you step aboard (other than the number of

steps it took to get there — this baby has some serious freeboard) are the wide, expansive deck and the towering three-spreader fractional rig. The performance-oriented Judel/Vrolijk naval architecture team was given a simple design brief — create a fast, easily handled, pure sailboat — and they responded by basically maximizing the dimensions, particularly beam and waterline length. (Interestingly, they also eschewed the hard chine that's become de rigueur in the latest generation of mass-produced cruising boats.)

Still, what struck me most was the traditional fully battened mainsail flaked in a stack pack on the boom (be still,

beating heart). Yes, you can order an optional furling main if you really want one, but a company rep said virtually nobody does. And that seems fitting. You wouldn't saddle a muscle car with a four-cylinder engine, and robbing this clearly commanding hull form — she has the broad-shouldered, no-nonsense mien of an Open 60 round-the-world racer — of max horsepower could be construed as a criminal act. This sailing machine is for serious sailors.

Given all that, when powered up in a seaway she'll also be capable of generating considerable loads on the spars, structure and appendages. Yet the 575 appears more than capable of handling whatever Mother Ocean serves up.

The straightforward sandwich laminate — the builder employs resin infusion on some of its other brands but not on the Hanses — marries balsa core above the waterline with a solid laminate below. A massive composite grid system is bonded to the hull with Plexus adhesive, as are the main bulkheads. All this allows the boat to be completed with the keel mounted and fixed (there are shoal- and deep-draft options, both of which are affixed with hefty ballast bulbs). Shrouds, chainplates, longitudinal stringers and ring frames are also tied into the grid, and the overlaid, flanged joint between the cored deck and the hull is bonded and glued, and capped off with a massive bulwark that negates the need for a secondary toe rail. The finished product is in essence an integrated, singular assembly with significant structural integrity.

Down below, thanks largely to the substantial interior volume, the floor plan and living spaces are open and generous. At opposite ends of the boat are a couple of different accommodations options. Forward, our test boat featured an elegant, very modern owner's stateroom with a centerline double berth. But you could also choose twin double cabins and even crew quarters in the forepeak (instead of the ample sail locker). Aft, another set of double cabins is standard, but you may also swap the large head adjacent to them, to port, for a guest cabin with bunk-style berths.

The main saloon has a lengthy straight-line galley to port, with a capacious dining area and navigation desk to starboard. With an abundance of flush deck hatches, port lights and coach-roof



With a powerful fully battened mainsail and a self-tacking jib, the Hanse 575 is a spirited performer upwind (opposite). The main saloon, with a straight-line galley to port and plenty of hatches and ports, is bathed in natural light (top). Perhaps the coolest feature is the “garage” for the jet-driven RIB, which should get the kids out of your hair for a while (above).

windows, the interior is bathed in natural light. Our test ride was finished in pleasant light oak, but cherry and mahogany are also available, and there are numerous choices in floorboards and upholstery as well.

Topsides, the single coolest item is the colossal swim platform with an electric gate in the transom that opens up to a garage beneath the cockpit for the storage of a custom jet-driven RIB. Yeehaw! That should get the kids out of your hair for a

while. Otherwise, this is a very smart and efficient deck layout. With a boat this beamy, the designers had little choice but to go with twin wheels, which both have comfortable seats and dedicated pods with a complete B&G instrument suite. The cockpit just forward has a pair of tables that can be lowered and draped with cushions to form a comfy lounging area. Wear your sunscreen!

The double-ended mainsheet terminates to handy electric winches port and

HANSE 575

LOA	56' 3"	(17.15 m.)
LWL	49' 8"	(15.15 m.)
Beam	17' 0"	(5.20 m.)
Draft (deep/shoal)	9' 4"/7' 4"	(2.85/2.25 m.)
Sail Area (100%)	1,727 sq. ft.	(160.5 sq. m.)
Ballast (deep)	13,007 lb.	(5,900 kg.)
(shoal)	14,991 lb.	(6,800 kg.)
Displacement	43,680 lb.	(19,500 kg.)
Ballast/D (deep/shoal)	.29/.34	
D/L	159	
SA/D	22.3	
Water	214 gal.	(810 l.)
Fuel	142 gal.	(540 l.)
Holding	40 gal.	(155 l.)
Mast Height	83' 0"	(25.30 m.)
Engine	Volvo 107 hp diesel	
Designer	Jude/Vrolijk	
Price	\$567,000 (base)	

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Wind speed	8 to 12 knots
Sea state	2 to 3 feet
Sailing	
Closehailed	6.8 knots
Reaching	8.5 knots
Motoring	
Cruise (2,400 rpm)	9.2 knots
Fast (2,800 rpm)	9.7 knots

starboard, just forward of the helm stations. There's no traveler, so you need to honk down (or ease off) on the hydraulic boom vang to control mainsail shape and twist. The 100 percent jib is self-tacking. A fitting on the bow will accommodate the tack of a code zero headsail on a single-line furler or an asymmetric cruising kite. Bear away and pick your poison.

We sailed the boat on a checkered Chesapeake Bay afternoon with spotty breeze. From the helm, sight lines forward were amazing. The wheels were as feathery as could be. Driving down in the puffs, notching 8.5 effortless knots, was more fun than I can describe. The only bummer was when they told me the trials were finished and I had to go home.

Herb McCormick is CW's senior editor.

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Night Moves

If sailing during times of low visibility is on your itinerary, check out these items to help you see in the dark. *By Jen Brett*

1 It's 0200, you're groggy, the wind is picking up and you need to reef. Now. This is not the time for mistakes. The **Glowfast rope clutch labels** glow in the dark for up to 20 hours, helping to eliminate the guesswork all night. [\\$25, glowfast.com](http://$25, glowfast.com)



2 The new **Navisafe headlamp** might become your best night-watch friend. It's waterproof to IPX6 standards, and has a red light for night vision, a white floodlight to illuminate the sails and a high-powered beam that can shine up to 70 meters. [\\$50, navisafe.com](http:$50, navisafe.com)



3 Out for a night sail? Spot obstacles and channel markers and find your mooring in the dark with the **NightSpotter handheld thermal imaging scope** by Iris. In an emergency situation, this easy-to-use scope can help you locate a crew member in the water. [\\$2,795, boat-cameras.com](http:$2,795, boat-cameras.com)



4 If you want cockpit lights but don't want to drill holes, check out **NightWatch Marine's inductively powered LED lights**. The power-transmitting puck is connected to 12-volt power and installed on the inside using adhesive, and the waterproof LED light is glued opposite it on the outside. [\\$45, nightwatch marine.com](http:$45, nightwatch marine.com)



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Brazil Among New Dream Destinations

Dream Yacht Charter will open bases in April 2015 in Angra dos Reis, whose bay features hundreds of tropical islands on Brazil's coast near Rio de Janeiro; in Palma, Majorca, in the Balearic Islands of Spain; and in Trogir, Croatia.

Bareboat, skippered and fully crewed charters will be offered in all locations aboard monohulls and multihulls. The Croatia base is Dream's second along the Adriatic Sea coast; the company's other base in the region is in Sibenik.

In other news, Dream, which is the exclusive representative for the Catana Bali 4.5 in the United States, planned to debut the catamaran at the Strictly Sail boat show in Miami, Florida, in February. The Bali 4.5 will be available at the company's bases in Annapolis, Maryland; the Bahamas; the Whitsunday islands, Australia; Turkey; and the British Virgin Islands. The Bali 4.2 will be available in Croatia. Contact the company for details (www.dreamyachtcharter.com).

Expedition Training Program

Morse Alpha Expeditions, led by Teresa and Ben Carey, is accepting applications for an offshore sail-training program aboard a Norseman 447 for the 2015 summer season. Four slots are available.

Crew will explore the rugged coasts of New England and Nova Scotia, gaining experience in all aspects of sail handling, navigation, living aboard, systems and safety. Each crew member is expected to take part in all the daily responsibilities aboard. No experience is required beyond an adventurous spirit and a desire to learn. For details log on to the website (morsealpha.com).

Programs Offered for Girls, Adults

Sisters Under Sail offers two courses, the Just for Girls and



The new Catana Bali 4.5 has four double cabins with en suite heads and is available through Dream Yacht Charter.

its Women un-Wind in summer 2015 in Lake Michigan aboard *Denis Sullivan*, a 137-foot replica of a Great Lakes schooner. The weeklong teen program runs July 25-31 and is open to girls ages 13 to 18. It includes hands-on learning and exploration of islands, lighthouses and nature areas. Space is limited to 16 crew.

The Women un-Wind program, July 12-17, is open to women 19 and older: sisters, older daughters, mothers, old and new friends. The trip focuses on exploration of Mackinac Island, including bicycle riding and visits to art galleries. Crew will also gain hands-on experience as the schooner sails among the islands. For details contact the group (www.sistersundersail.org).

Charter Chatter

Charter broker Northrop & Johnson has opened an office in Los Angeles, California, in the heart of Beverly Hills (www.northropandjohnson.com) ... BoatSetter, a Florida-based booking website, targets users looking for a captained charter. For details log on to the website (boatsetter.com) ... The 80-foot Sunreef sailing catamaran *Levante* is available in spring 2015 in the British Virgin Islands and the Bahamas (www.sunreef-charter.com) ... The 76-foot South African Matrix Silhouette sailing catamaran *King's Ransom* is available for charter in Croatia in summer 2015 through Sunreef (www.sunreef-charter.com). Elaine Lembo

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Kiriacoulis	800-714-3471	p.78
FPP Canal Boating	888-652-3969	p.82
Dream Yacht Charters	866-776-8256	p.73
Tortola Marine Management Ltd.	800-633-0155	p.77
The Catamaran Company	800-262-0308	p.70-71
Conch Charters Ltd.*	877-521-8939	p.74
Horizon Yacht Charters Ltd.*	877-494-8787	p.81

Annapolis Bay Charters*	800-991-1776	p.72
Barefoot Yacht Charters*	784-456-9256	p.78
CYOA Yacht Charters	800-944-2962	p.81
Island Yachts*	800-524-2019	p.78
Sail Caribe	866-381-7609	p.79
Southwest Florida Yachts*	800-262-7939	p.80
Cruise Annapolis	443-949-9481	p.80
Sailing CBI Inc.	902-567-1494	p.80

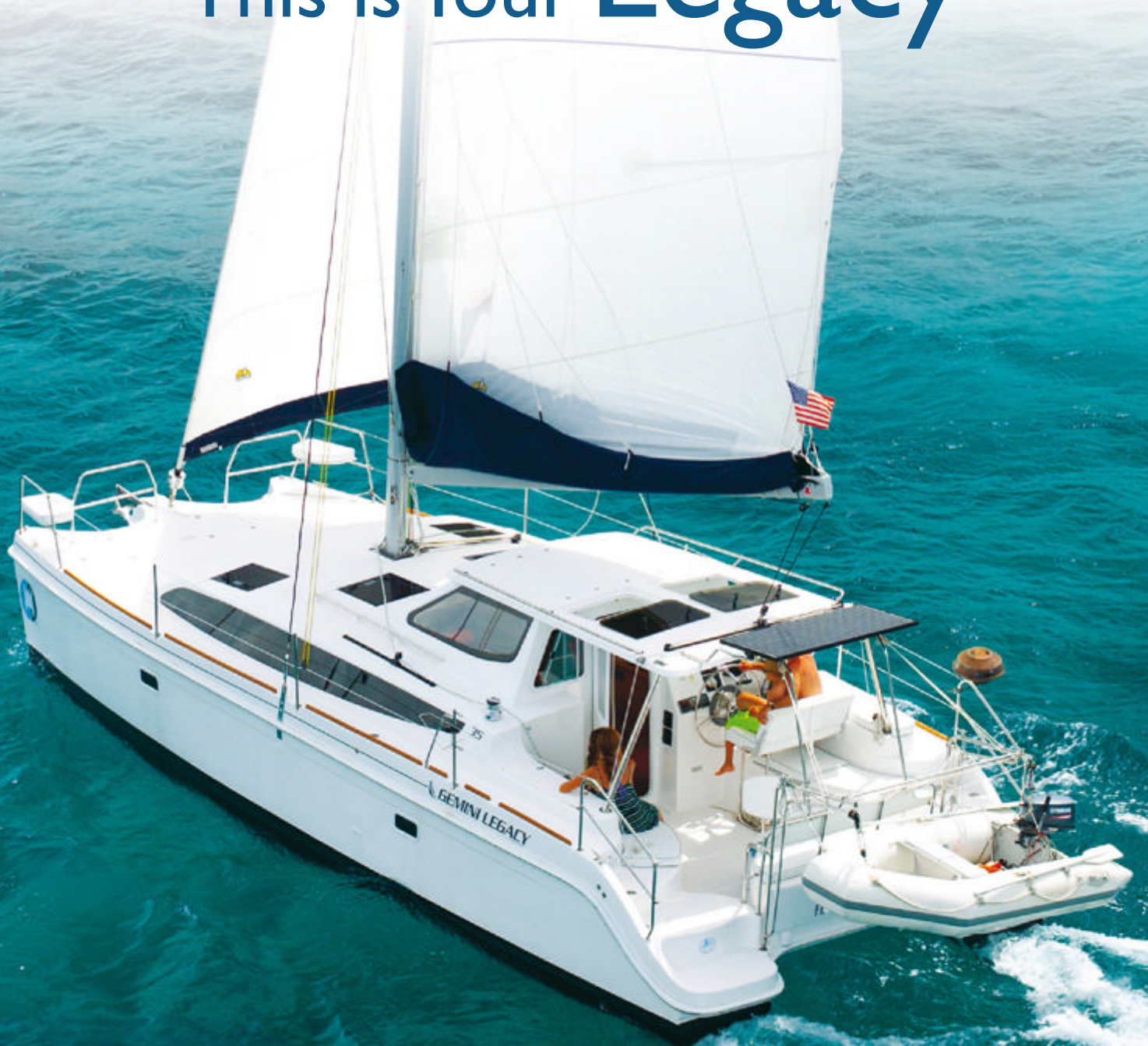
BROKER		
Ed Hamilton & Co.	800-621-7855	p.34
Nicholson Yachts Worldwide	401-849-0344	p.82

*Also broker
This directory is a list of charter companies advertising in this charter section; it is not an endorsement by the editors. Classified advertisers not listed. Listings are arranged in fleet size order.

"Charter companies" listed maintain fleets of bareboats and report that they maintain chase boats/personnel, carry liability insurance, return security deposits in 10 working days, deliver the boat contracted (or same size, type, age, condition, or better), supply MOB gear and offer pre-charter briefings. "Brokers" are not affiliated with any charter company; they book private or company-owned boats, crewed or bareboat.



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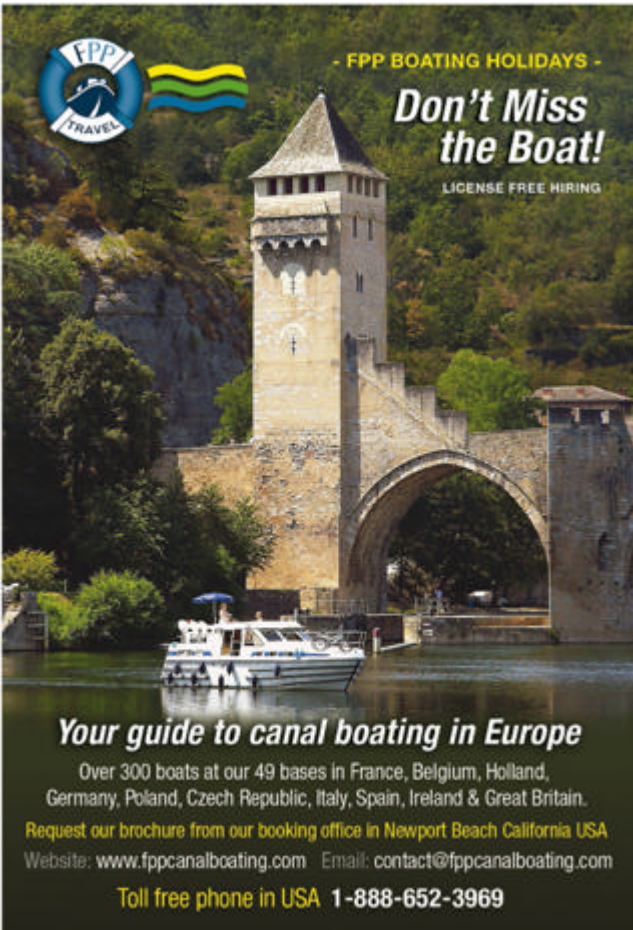
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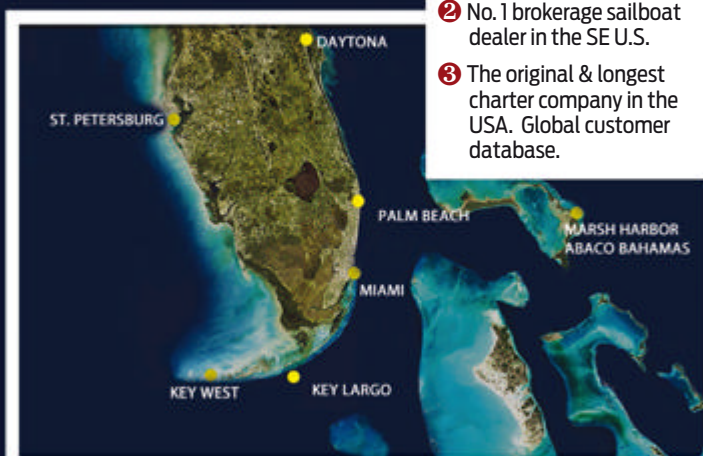
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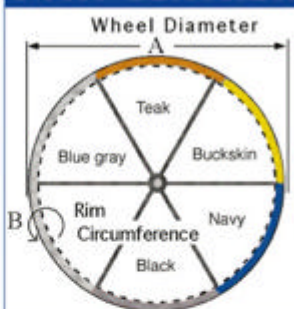
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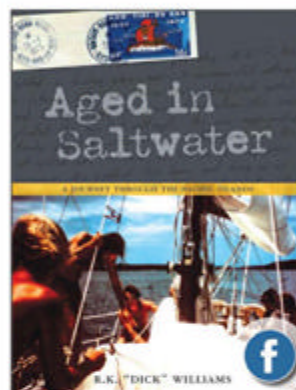
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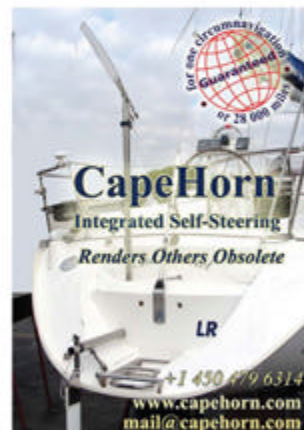
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Wizards of Oz



Jim Clark's 100-foot *Comanche* was poised to win the Sydney Hobart, but an odd thing happened on the way to the finish line.

One of the most remarkable days of my sailing life took place on Dec. 26, 2007, at the start of the 63rd running of the venerable Rolex Sydney Hobart Race. For years I'd been scrambling for a berth in the famous event, which begins each year on Boxing Day in Sydney Harbor, and I'd finally made it as crew aboard a modest Aussie racer/cruiser called *Morna*, a Cavalier 35.

OK, *Morna* was one of the smallest boats in the fleet, but I couldn't have cared less. Just being there — tens of thousands of folks lining the shores, a huge spectator fleet on the water, helicopters whirring overhead while the start was broadcast on national television — was incredible. Four days later we rolled into Hobart, having negotiated one of the more interesting, challenging and diverse racecourses imaginable (see "Pipe Dreams," page 12). And that was that. I was hooked on Sydney Hobart.

Sadly, I haven't been back,

but following the race closely from afar has become a personal holiday tradition, like trimming the tree. I love tracking the boats and hearing the heavy-weather sea tales and trying to guess exactly when the first "southerly buster" — the inevitable nightmare gale spawned in the Roaring Forties — will thrash the fleet. Big storms are no worry sprawled out on my couch.

Heck, I even enjoy following the personalities, for the Hobart Race is full of characters. The year I did it, our navigator, Jim Dixon, was competing in his 13th event.

Yet compared to many race veterans, he was just getting started. For 2014, the 70th running of the race, a pair of esteemed Aussies — Tony Cable and former America's Cup contender Syd Fischer — were competing in their 49th Hobart (these gentlemen are sailing's true Wizards of Oz). That's possible because while some of the world's classic ocean races, such as Newport Bermuda and the Fastnet, run every other year, Sydney Hobart is contested annually. It's as much of an Australian institution as Crocodile Dundee, Qantas, Fosters lager and "shrimp on the barbie." There's nothing in the U.S. that remotely compares.

Though for 2014, especially here in my hometown of Newport, Rhode Island, there was an intriguing local angle. Last November, with the sailing season long over, a gargantuan 100-foot race boat with intimidating black sails — she might've been called *Darth Vader* — began sea trials on Narragansett Bay. Turns out she was *Comanche*, a state-of-the-art rocket ship commissioned and owned by Silicon Valley billionaire Jim Clark and skippered by homegrown Rhode Island hero Ken Read, who is also the president of North Sails. After a short work-up, *Comanche* was sailed south to Charleston, South Carolina, loaded onto a freighter, and shipped across the Pacific for her inaugural yacht race. Yes, the Sydney Hobart.

Clark's other boats, the 136-foot J-Class replica *Hanuman* and his "cruising boat," a 295-footer called *Athena*, have also been frequent visitors to Newport.

(Read notes that Clark owns "531 feet of yachts" but is in the process of divesting himself of the equivalent length of several football fields in nautical real estate.) But *Comanche* is something else altogether, a take-no-prisoners weapon fashioned almost exclusively of carbon fiber that was designed and built to slay all of the world's major races and speed records. Clark's also married to a former Aussie fashion model named Kristy Hinze — some dudes have all the luck — which explains why Sydney Hobart was put at the very top of the list. Winning line honors as first to finish, many thought, was a foregone conclusion.

But a funny thing happened on the Road to Glory. *Comanche's* nickname is the "aircraft carrier" for her wide decks. But her other major design feature is a hard chine, like many modern production cruising boats (think of Beneteau's Sense line on steroids). She's meant to sail on a nice heel, to ride the chine as if on rails, minimizing wetted surface. In fresh breeze, it worked at first, and *Comanche* enjoyed an early lead. But on day 2 the wind died. Another, much slimmer 100-footer, *Wild Oats XI*, owned by yet another grizzled Aussie wizard named Bob Oatley, overtook Read's steed. *Comanche's* broad beam proved to be a sticky liability in light air, and *Wild Oats* sailed on to victory.

And Read and Clark? Well, this time at least, they were just a couple of guys behind a curtain.

Herb McCormick is CW's senior editor.



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